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General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

THIRD COMMITTEE
30th meeting
held on
Monday, 5 November 1990
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 30th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. SOMAVIA (Chile)

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AGENDA ITEM 108: INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO COMBAT DRUG ABUSE AND ILLICIT TRAFFICKING (continued)

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A/C.3/45/SR.30
9 November 1990

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 108: INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO COMBAT DRUG ABUSE AND ILLICIT TRAFFICKING (continued) (A/45/3, Chap. V, Sect. D, A/45/301, A/45/303, A/45/329, A/45/495, A/45/535, A/45/536, A/45/542, A/45/652 and Add.1; A/C.3/45/4 and E/1990/39/Add.1)

1. Mr. TIN (Myanmar) said that the Political Declaration and Global Plan of Action (S-17/2) adopted by the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly and the Declaration issued by the World Ministerial Summit to Reduce Demand for Drugs and to Combat the Cocaine Threat, held in London, had given added impetus to efforts to combat drug abuse. The international community must strive to strengthen the United Nations role and tackle the problem of drug abuse and trafficking in all its dimensions simultaneously. Measures to curb illicit production of and trafficking in drugs and measures to prevent illicit demand must be intensified concurrently. Action was the joint responsibility of producer, transit and consumer countries.

2. In Myanmar the campaign against the threat posed by narcotic drugs had begun as soon as the country regained independence in 1948. The Government had allocated significant amounts of its limited resources to the campaign, as a national priority, and was conducting large-scale military operations to destroy poppy cultivation, prohibit drug traffickers and demolish their refineries in the remote frontier areas. Hundreds of soldiers had given their lives in the struggle. Drug trafficking in Myanmar was invariably linked with the problem of insurgency, and it was essential for international measures to be taken to prevent drug traffickers from using their ill-gotten money to procure guns.

3. His Government believed that the war against narcotic drugs must be multi-faceted and multi-sectoral, and that its strategy must embrace the entire range of drug abuse control activities, including law enforcement, crop substitution, livestock-breeding, medical treatment, social and vocational rehabilitation, education and mass-media information.

4. In Myanmar, a comprehensive programme for developing the remote frontier areas had been launched with a view to eliminating the need to cultivate the opium poppy or "hell-flower". In May 1989 the Government had established the Work Committee for Development of Border Areas and National Races, under which a rural development programme had been started with the aim of accelerating the economic and social development of the remote border areas. The Government was convinced that the successful implementation of the programme would ultimately bring about the eradication of the opium poppy in the frontier areas, where it was cultivated as a cash crop by impoverished villagers as the only means of earning their livelihood.

5. The first step would be to establish key villages where roads, housing, electric power, clean water supply, schools and medical centres would be developed. In the initial phase, the Government would provide the basic needs of the villagers, such as food, clothing and housing, and arable land would be developed for the planting of alternative cash crops. Ultimately, local people

(Mr. Tin, Myanmar)

from the surrounding areas, living on less-developed land, would be given incentives to move to established key villages where living conditions were better. The programme placed special emphasis on building the all-important economic and social infrastructure of the remote frontier areas which had been totally neglected before the country had regained independence. The programme was already having a perceptible impact in nearly 50 townships where the opium poppy was cultivated.

6. Myanmar was fully aware of the worldwide dimensions of the drug problem and the need for regional co-operation. Specially trained task forces were being formed to co-ordinate drug control activities with their counterparts in neighbouring countries. Close co-operation had already been established with countries sharing common borders east of the Thanewin River and consultations were under way with China and the Lao People's Democratic Republic with a view to closer and more comprehensive co-operation.

7. Mr. BISTA (Nepal) said that drug abuse and illicit trafficking had reached epidemic proportions and the narco-terrorist and anti-social elements that organized and financed those activities not only threatened to destroy the entire economic and governmental apparatus in many developing countries but were undermining the prospects for international peace and security. Since those criminals recognized no boundaries, no country, acting alone, could hope to curb the threat. Efforts were needed at all levels, national, regional and international.

8. At the global level, the United Nations was the most appropriate instrument to deal with the problem because of its universal character and its responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. The Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961, as amended by the 1972 Protocol, and the Convention on Psychotropic Substances, 1971 were the major international treaty instruments that provided the framework for co-operation in formulating national and international drug control laws. By adopting the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control (CMO) in 1987, the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances in 1988 and the Global Programme in 1990, the international community had demonstrated its resolve to eradicate the scourge of drug abuse. The emerging international climate resulting from the relaxation of super-Power rivalry offered an opportunity for strengthening global action.

9. His delegation was pleased to learn that the United Nations Convention had now secured the required number of ratifications and would become binding international law on 11 November 1990. Its provisions on freezing, seizure and confiscation of property derived from drug trafficking, extradition of drug traffickers and co-operation among States were some of the significant elements of the narcotics control mechanism. His delegation believed that, given the political will, the Convention could prove a potent weapon.

(Mr. Bista, Nepal)

10. His delegation welcomed the decision by the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) to hold regular organizing meetings of Heads of Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA), since such meetings would offer an excellent opportunity for regional co-operation and could also play an important role in training and technical assistance for Member States lacking the necessary expertise. The seven countries of the South-Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) were intensifying their efforts in devising strategies for combating the problem.

11. Although Nepal was fortunate in that the drug problem was not yet serious, the Government had already adopted a number of stringent drug control measures in response to the appeal by the United Nations and with a view to preventing the spread of the problem. The Narcotic Drugs Act of 1976, the principal body of law, had been revised in 1986 and 1987 to include measures recommended by United Nations organs for implementation by Member States. Cultivation, production, distribution and trafficking were now illegal, and the Act also provides for confiscation of the proceeds of drug trafficking and punishment of traffickers. Its implementation at all levels was co-ordinated and monitored by the Ministry of Home Affairs. The Government had also adopted a number of curative measures to rehabilitate victims and reintegrate them in society.

12. Believing that awareness programmes were an essential part of effective drug abuse prevention strategy, the Government was using the mass media to inform people, particularly young people, of the adverse consequences of drugs for individual health, the family and the social structure. Non-governmental organizations were working in partnership with local people to educate, treat and rehabilitate the victims of drug abuse. Experience had shown, however, that without the support of the international community, efforts would be seriously handicapped by financial limitations and lack of technical expertise.

13. The drug problem was a collective responsibility and could not be solved merely by apportioning blame to the drug-producing or the drug-consuming countries. Eradication called for a two-pronged approach aimed at reducing demand and restricting supply within the framework of the Vienna Convention of 1988 and the Global Programme of Action adopted by the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly. Farmers in the developing countries must be encouraged to switch from illicit crop cultivation to other cash crops which must be given easy access to the markets of the developed countries, while the developed countries must intensify their efforts to reduce demand. His delegation welcomed the initiative of the United Kingdom in convening a World Ministerial Summit to Reduce Demand for Drugs and to Combat the Cocaine Threat with a view to devising strategies.

14. His delegation was keenly interested in the work of the United Nations drug abuse control structures but believed that they would be more effective if they were amalgamated into a single unified anti-drug unit. It therefore supported the recommendations of the Secretary-General contained in document A/45/652.

READEX FICHE

15. Mr. HART (Australia) said that, as the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna had pointed out in her statement, the role of the United Nations in illicit drug control was not new, and in some areas the Organization had taken over League of Nations mandates. There had, however, been a noticeable quickening of activity in recent years, culminating in the forthcoming entry into force of the Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

16. Although the 1987 International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking had demonstrated a growing recognition of the dangers of drug production, consumption and trafficking, and the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline adopted by the Conference remained a basic document for concerted international action, the Conference had proved to be only a starting point in translating that recognition into an effective international response. It was not until 1989 that it had been internationally reaffirmed at the highest political levels that a renewed political commitment and significant additional resources were needed if there was to be any prospect of making headway against the threat posed by illicit drugs. There had been a great deal of international activity since then, as well as political co-operation at other levels and Australia particularly welcomed the recent decision of the Japanese Government to host a major conference on South-East Asian and Pacific drug issues in the first quarter of 1991.

17. The year 1990 had been an important one for the United Nations in developing its role in international drug control and no one, least of all his delegation, doubted its vital contribution to achievements so far. At the same time, no one should doubt that much more remained to be done. The effective execution of all United Nations mandates would call for increased resources and a concerted, coherent effort throughout the United Nations system. That would require full-time high-level leadership. The United Nations must also be able to interact with and influence other drug control programmes and policies, and that would require liaison at a very senior level.

18. The battle against drug abuse had not yet been lost - it had barely begun. It was up to the international community to prove in the coming years that production, trafficking and consumption of illicit drugs could be controlled. While bilateral and multilateral action were certainly important, the United Nations should have a central role in international drug control efforts. To respond to the increased importance of drug control activities, the Organization needed to be not only financially stronger but also more adaptable to the demands of the situation. It was in that connection that Australia welcomed documents A/45/652 and A/45/652/Add.1, which dealt with the work of the Group fo Experts appointed to advise and assist the Secretary-General on the enhancement of the efficiency of the United Nations structure for drug abuse control. However, like Mexico, his delegation would have wished for earlier circulation of the latter document.

19. The new United Nations structure for drug abuse control had to provide a higher status for drug control activities within the United Nations system; high-level, full-time leadership for the Vienna secretariat unit; a single programme for all United Nations Secretariat drug control activities; and a clear line of authority from the programme head to the Secretary-General. In short,

(Mr. Hart, Australia)

to respond fully and vigorously to the challenge of combating drug abuse in the 1990s, the United Nations must be prepared to undertake a complete restructuring of its existing units in Vienna.

20. Mr. PULZ (Czechoslovakia) said that the problem of drug abuse and the illicit production and trafficking of drugs represented a serious global threat and called for a new comprehensive international approach. In that connection, the Global Programme of Action against illicit narcotic drugs, adopted by the General Assembly at its seventeenth special session in February 1990, provided the practical framework within which the United Nations could spearhead such an effort.

21. The Secretary-General's reports on the work of the United Nations system in combating the drug problem deserved the Committee's full attention. The conclusions contained in the report on the enhancement of the efficiency of the United Nations structure for drug abuse control (A/45/652) were of particular importance. His delegation was in favour of consolidating the three existing secretariats into one unit, the head of which would be directly accountable to the Secretary-General. Such a change should be implemented without delay. Noteworthy also was the Secretary-General's report on the recent meetings of the Intergovernmental Expert Group to Study the Economic and Social Consequences of Illicit Traffic in Drugs, contained in document A/45/535. The recommendations in paragraph 13 of the report provided useful guidelines for United Nations efforts in that field.

22. While primarily a transit point, his country was taking an active part in all phases of the international campaign against drug abuse, with special emphasis on controlling the production of illicit drug precursors and limiting drug distribution. In an effort to step up its drug control activities, his country was also reorganizing its anti-narcotics police units, reinforcing and expanding its contacts with the relevant agencies in other countries and reviewing its drug control legislation. In June 1990, it had established a governmental commission on narcotic drugs, which served to co-ordinate the various domestic efforts in that sphere and to monitor the implementation of the multilateral and bilateral drug control treaties.

23. His country was in the process of revising the sections of its Penal Code which related to illicit drugs and had set in motion the legal procedures for ratification of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and for accession to the Protocol to the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs.

24. His Government was increasing its multilateral and bilateral co-operation activities through, inter alia, renewed participation in Interpol consultations with other European countries. It also endorsed the establishment of the Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA), European Region. His country was keenly interested in participating in the activities of the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC) and was considering the possibility of making a financial contribution to the Fund.

25. Mrs. ARYSTANBEKOVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) stressed the need to strengthen joint efforts to combat drug abuse and stop illicit drug trafficking in a world where drug addiction was on the rise, new countries were being involved in illicit trafficking and the economic, political and moral foundations of society were increasingly threatened. In that connection, her delegation welcomed the fact that 27 States had already ratified the Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

26. The United Nations must become a centre for co-ordinating measures by the international community to combat drug abuse. In order to do so, the Organization's structure for drug abuse control must be streamlined for greater efficiency. Accordingly, her delegation supported the recommendation by the Group of Experts concerning the amalgamation of the three existing secretariat units into a single executive structure and the establishment of a United Nations programme to combat narcotic drugs. That would increase mobility, eliminate duplication of effort and make more rational use of existing resources.

27. The new structure must co-ordinate its activities with the United Nations Office at Vienna, particularly with regard to measures to combat organized crime in the field of drug trafficking. United Nations activities to combat drug abuse must be adequately funded, allocations of budgetary funds must be monitored, all possible savings must be made and resources must be redeployed where required.

28. Further consideration should be given to the economic and social consequences of illicit traffic in drugs. She stressed the need for an in-depth study of the social causes of drug addiction and for preventive measures to forestall dangerous new trends in that area.

29. Considering that regional co-operation was particularly important in combating drug abuse, her delegation welcomed the decision to convene a European meeting of the Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA). Illegal drug production in the "Golden Crescent", which was adjacent to the southern borders of the Soviet Union, was growing at a dangerous rate, particularly in Afghanistan. The Afghan Government was making a serious effort to halt illicit trafficking and the Soviet Union was co-operating in that regard on a bilateral basis. Nevertheless, it was clear that the Government was unable to solve the problem. The initiatives aimed at establishing close co-operation between the countries of the region on a subregional basis should be given very serious consideration. The Soviet Union's bilateral co-operation in that field with a large number of States was continuing to grow and was acquiring an increasingly solid legal basis. Her delegation favoured the elaboration of effective instruments for combating drug abuse and would support a collective decision by the Committee aimed at strengthening international co-operation in the field.

30. Mr. BURCUOGLU (Turkey) said that he wished to avail himself of the opportunity to speak to reaffirm his delegation's full support for the Government and people of Colombia in their struggle against the drug menace.

(Mr. Burcuoglu, Turkey)

31. The seventeenth special session of the General Assembly had been highly productive. In particular, the adoption by consensus of the Political Declaration and the Global Programme of Action had demonstrated the firm resolve of the international community to combat the scourge of drugs. As one of the first countries to call attention to the links between illicit drug traffic, contraband weapons, and international terrorism, Turkey welcomed the fact that that linkage had been acknowledged in the documents adopted at the session.

32. In addition to the guidelines for action provided by the seventeenth special session, the recent World Ministerial Summit to Reduce Demand for Drugs and to Combat the Cocaine Threat had underscored the need that equal importance should be accorded to reducing both the demand for and the supply of illicit drugs.

33. He was also gratified by the entry into force in November 1990 of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. Turkey, which was a signatory to the Convention, currently applied several of its provisions and was taking steps towards ratification.

34. His country had achieved remarkable results in the fight against the illicit production and use of drugs. However, with its geographical situation on what was known as the Balkan route, Turkey faced the challenge of expanding illicit transit activities. In order to strengthen its ability to seek out and combat drug-related crime, Turkey had entered into bilateral co-operation agreements with several countries and with United Nations specialized agencies, including two recent agreements between Turkey and UNFDAC.

35. With international drug trafficking having reached alarming proportions, the United Nations had to have adequate resources to wage a successful campaign. It was therefore vital to allocate an increased share of the regular budget and more generous voluntary contributions to the United Nations agencies dealing with drug control.

36. The Group of Experts to advise and assist the Secretary-General on the enhancement of the efficiency of the United Nations structure for drug abuse control had submitted a valuable report of the highest quality. The Secretary-General had endorsed the work of the Group, in particular, their recommendation that a single secretariat unit should be established at Vienna to oversee all drug control activities.

37. Mr. NAVARRETE (Chile) said that the problem of the illicit production, trafficking and consumption of drugs was one of the most serious challenges facing mankind. Because the problem affected the entire world, no country was justified in refusing to participate in the search for realistic and appropriate solutions.

38. The Political Declaration and the Global Programme of Action adopted at the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly, combined with the widespread adherence to the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, provided a general framework in which to develop the necessary strategies to achieve the objectives of drug control.

(Mr. Navarrete, Chile)

39. Chile welcomed the work carried out by the Group of Experts and endorsed the principal recommendations contained in their report (A/45/652/Add.1). That report, which dealt with the enhancement of the efficiency of the United Nations structure for drug abuse control, merited serious consideration.

40. While its drug problem had not reached the serious dimensions of some other countries, CHile was nevertheless concerned by the growing international network of drug traffickers. There had recently been evidence of drug transit activities and money laundering within his country. In response, the Chilean democratic régime, which had come into office in March 1990, was implementing a set of policies including stringent customs control, security checks, prevention of drug abuse and demand reduction. Unfortunately, the existing legislation still had gaps which needed to be filled as rapidly as possible. His Government was therefore making every effort to modernize the aspects of its legal system which dealt with drug control. It gave high priority to imposing severe penalties on those individuals who manufactured, processed or in any other manner produced drugs or psychotropic substances creating drug dependency and representing potential public health hazards. Such a policy was in response to the urgent need to control the growing threat of illicit drug activities.

41. His country's drug laws must be made to conform to international norms, particularly those relating to the control of chemical substances used to produce narcotic drugs. Chile's laws were also being changed to prevent money laundering and make the police more effective, and measures to prevent the growing of illicit crops and to prevent and punish trafficking were being strengthened

42. Preventing drug abuse was an integral part of the country's efforts to protect the health of the population. Marijuana was one of the most extensively abused drugs because of easy access and low price. Marijuana crops were grown illegally in the southern part of the country. Stimulants in general and amphetamine derivatives were also widely abused, and in the northern part of the country there was an extensive illegal traffic in cocaine and its derivatives. The Government had therefore established a national drug control council to advise the President in matters involving the prevention and control of drug abuse as well as the rehabilitation and social reintegration of addicts. Extensive efforts to educate the population were being carried out through conferences, seminars and the like.

43. Chile, which had recently signed bilateral agreements to control drug abuse with a number of Latin American countries, stressed the need for a global policy taking into account all aspects of the problem, including alternative crops, economic assistance, access to international credit sources and availability of personnel to eradicate production centres. The time had come to halt the illicit production, trafficking and consumption of narcotic drugs, while at the same time safeguarding the sovereignty and self-determination of peoples. His country was prepared to do its utmost to achieve that objective.

44. Mrs. BENNAGHMOUCH (Morocco) said that the international community had rightly assigned a high priority to combating the growing scourge of drug abuse. The developing countries, which produced the narcotic drug plants, required greater international technical and economic support to prevent their own drug control efforts from jeopardising the development strategies they had formulated to improve the standard of living of their people. Crop substitution could succeed only with guaranteed markets for new crops and for the raw materials that provided those countries with their major source of income. The demand for drugs must also be reduced, and action to combat drug abuse was the shared responsibility of consumer and producer countries.

45. In order for the United Nations to intensify its drug control efforts, urgent measures would have to be taken to remedy the 33 to 35 million dollar biennial deficit that was currently undermining its drug activities. The lack of co-ordination among the various United Nations bodies dealing with drug control must also be corrected as soon as possible.

46. Morocco had formulated a national strategy that included measures to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking, to educate the public about the dangers of drug abuse and to treat and rehabilitate addicts. It also appreciated the help it had received in those efforts from the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control and from the European Economic Community.

47. Mr. KHOSHROO (Iran) said that the sevenfold increase in the production and consumption of drugs in the past 10 years created a crisis that called for concerted action by the international community at all levels. Iran was in a region through which much illicit drug traffic passed and it had undertaken a major effort to stop it through the enactment and vigorous implementation of laws against the cultivation, production, import and export, distribution, consumption and stockpiling of narcotics, severe punishment of traffickers, improved border controls, the establishment of centres for the rehabilitation and treatment of addicts, the use of the mass media to educate the public about addiction and the compilation of statistical data about addicts and traffickers.

48. The drug problem was international in scope and could only be dealt with through international and regional co-operation. Iran had therefore been an active participant in international and regional efforts to combat drugs and had signed a number of bilateral agreements for regional co-operation.

49. Mrs. ZABOLAI CSEKME (Observer, International Labour Organisation) said that the ILO was fully aware of the magnitude of the problem of drug abuse and was prepared to co-operate with all the relevant bodies and agencies of the United Nations system in dealing with it. Demand reduction and rehabilitation were essential but could not be achieved without full employment, the development of human resorces and better living and working conditions, and the ILO, by implementing its basic mandate, helped create an environment that discouraged drug consumption. Initiatives at the workplace were extremely effective in preventing and reducing substance abuse problems, and the ability to obtain or hold a job was essential in the rehabilitation and reintegration of addicts. Work also conferred the dignity and sense of responsibility that were conducive to a drug-free and

(Mrs. Zabolai Csekme, Observer, ILO)

productive life. The ILO had accordingly adopted a resolution stressing the role of Governments, employers and workers' organizations in reducing demand through programmes at the workplace and community levels and calling for ILO action in the areas of rehabilitation, substance abuse at the workplace and the integration of youth, as well as increased interagency collaboration.

50. The ILO also placed special emphasis on information and education at the workplace and helped recovering addicts to readjust through vocational rehabilitation. Its efforts to reduce demand included the dissemination of a multi-media kit providing information about substance abuse at the workplace, the range of available responses, the implementation of programmes and the availability of resources. It had also implemented numerous national and regional rehabilitation projects. The ILO worked closely with employers' and workers' organizations, which were becoming increasingly important partners in rehabilitation programmes, and it was prepared to co-operate with the international community in all efforts to remove the root causes of drug abuse and provide for the rehabilitation and reintegration of recovering addicts.

51. Mr. EMBLAD (World Health Organization) said that WHO had recently set up a special programme to reduce the impact of substance abuse on society and stop its spread world wide. The programme sought to diminish the demand for addictive substances, develop effective approaches for the treatment of substance dependence, help control the supply of licit psychoactive substances, and ensure that health components were included in all national drug policies. WHO has decided to take that step because substance abuse was seriously affecting the health and welfare of more people than ever before, including babies, children and pregnant women. There were communities in Europe, North and South America, and Asia, where drugs and drug-related diseases had become one of the four leading causes of death among young men and women. There was also evidence that they might be a prime factor in the increasing rates of sexually transmitted diseases, complications in pregnancy and child neglect.

52. WHO intended to mobilize the increased numbers of health and social workers available for combating drug and alcohol abuse. At the same time, it was important to strengthen existing health and social services in order to meet the growing need to provide care to the individuals and families affected. The World Health Organization planned to set up a major research and intervention programme to understand better and control the dynamics of substance abuse. It would increase its activities in the area of treatment and rehabilitation and play a more active role in the control of licit psychoactive substances. Working through national primary health care systems, WHO hoped to carry out primary prevention activities and ensure that adequate resources were set aside in all national drug programmes for that purpose. Without the active involvement of the international and national health sectors to reverse the current trend, the health of children, young people and future generations would be further threatened by the widespread abuse of drugs and alcohol.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

THIRD COMMITTEE
31st meeting
held on
Monday, 5 November 1990
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 31st MEETING

Chairman: Mr. SOMAVIA (Chile)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 103: IMPORTANCE OF THE UNIVERSAL REALIZATION OF THE RIGHT OF PEOPLES TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND OF THE SPEEDY GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES FOR THE EFFECTIVE GUARANTEE AND OBSERVANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 101: ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 102: FORWARD-LOOKING STRATEGIES FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN TO THE YEAR 2000 (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 108: INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO COMBAT DRUG ABUSE AND ILLICIT TRAFFICKING (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 103: IMPORTANCE OF THE UNIVERSAL REALIZATION OF THE RIGHT OF PEOPLES TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND OF THE SPEEDY GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES FOR THE EFFECTIVE GUARANTEE AND OBSERVANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS (continued)

Explanations of vote after the vote on draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.6 (continued)

1. Mr. CALAFETEANU (Romania), speaking in explanation of vote, said that although his delegation shared the concerns expressed in draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.6, it noted with regret the ideological prejudice in the language of some of the preambular paragraphs and the operative part and considered that such language was not conducive to a joint search by the States Members of the United Nations for a lasting and peaceful solution to all problems of international scope.

2. Although it condemned apartheid, whose principles and practices had caused a bitter conflict in South Africa, Romania noted that some Member States believed that the option of a dialogue with all the political forces in South Africa might make some contribution to the eradication of apartheid. There was no doubt that the international pressures brought to bear on the racist apartheid régime had contributed to the positive recent developments in South Africa. In his delegation's opinion the United Nations should not relax its pressure. Furthermore, to relegate South Africa to the margins of the dialogue would not help to accelerate the fragile process of change which had finally begun in that country. Accordingly, his delegation had abstained in the vote on the draft resolution.

3. Mr. BURCUOGLU (Turkey) said that his delegation had abstained for two reasons. First, Turkey was opposed in principle to the designation of groups of States on the basis of geographical, political or other criteria in order to criticize or condemn them or hold them responsible for the policies of the racist régime of South Africa; operative paragraph 19 of the draft resolution again condemned a certain group of States. Second, it was regrettable that the text did not reflect realistically the positive changes which had taken place in the world in the past year and that many of the paragraphs still used outmoded language.

4. Mr. MALGINOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that despite the changes in southern Africa the international community should not relax its pressure on Pretoria, for conditions were now favourable for eradicating apartheid by means of joint action. The draft resolution did not contain all the essential elements of that process, nor did it allow for the possibility of a political solution. In some instances it used language which was inconsistent with the language of other United Nations documents, in particular the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa, adopted by consensus in December 1989. For those reasons his delegation had abstained in the vote on the draft resolution and in the votes on separate paragraphs. It was important to draft a text which took into consideration the interests of all regions and which could be approved by the whole international community.

5. Ms. DIEGUEZ (Mexico) said that her delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution but wished to enter reservations about preambular paragraph 24 and operative paragraph 20.

6. Mr. ALFARO (El Salvador) said that his delegation had abstained in the vote on the draft resolution because it was not in full agreement with operative paragraph 2. Although El Salvador supported unreservedly the right of peoples to self-determination, it did not agree with the inclusion in the paragraph of the phrase "including armed struggle", since it was open to different interpretations.

7. Mr. OGURTSOV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that his delegation's abstention in the vote on the draft resolution did not indicate any change in its firm and unswerving recognition of the right of peoples to self-determination. However, his delegation had reservations about the wording of some of the paragraphs and about some of the approaches set out in the draft resolution.

8. Mr. MONTALVO (Ecuador) said that his country reiterated its position of principle on such fundamental issues as the self-determination of peoples and the condemnation of apartheid and foreign aggression and occupation. His delegation had voted in favour because it considered that the draft resolution recognized those principles. However, where the form was concerned, it would have been possible to adopt language which was more conciliatory and less hostile and provocative and promoted dialogue and a peaceful and permanent solution to disputes.

9. Mr. PAPPALARDO (Paraguay) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution although it did not endorse the strong language of some of the paragraphs and thought that such language did not contribute to the attainment of the fundamental goal of the draft resolution.

10. Ms. TAVARES de ALVAREZ (Dominican Republic) said that her delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution although it did not agree with the wording of some of its paragraphs or with the specific reference to certain States, for that was a subjective element which weakened the text.

Draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.9

11. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to consider draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.9 on the universal realization of the right of peoples to self-determination, which had been introduced by Pakistan, and announced that Botswana, Chile, Vanuatu and Sierra Leone had become sponsors.

12. Ms. KAMAL (Secretary of the Committee) said that draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.9 had no financial implications for the programme budget.

13. Mr. QURESHI (Pakistan) announced that Indonesia had become a sponsor of the draft resolution.

14. Draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.9 was adopted without a vote.

15. Ms. MEHTA (India), speaking in explanation of vote, said that her delegation had not opposed the adoption of the draft resolution without a vote but maintained its position concerning article 1 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and concerning the relevant resolutions of the Commission on Human Rights. With regard to article 1 of the Covenant, the Government of India interpreted the phrase "the right to self-determination" as applying only to peoples subject to foreign rule and not to sovereign and independent States or to a part of a people or nation, for otherwise an essential attribute of national integrity would be called into question.

Draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.10

16. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to consider the draft resolution contained in document A/C.3/45/L.10, entitled "Use of mercenaries as a means to violate human rights and to impede the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination", and said that Ecuador, Ghana, Kenya, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Maldives, Senegal, Vanuatu and Viet Nam had been added to the list of sponsors.

17. Ms. KAMAL (Secretary of the Committee) said that draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.10 had no programme budget implications.

18. Mr. ALFARO (El Salvador), speaking in explanation of vote before the vote, said that his delegation would vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.10. However, he wished to make clear that, with respect to the second preambular paragraph, his delegation accepted the principle of the struggle of national liberation movements provided that that expression was not used to conceal the true intentions of irregular armed groups seeking to destroy democratic processes through the use of violence and terror, with the aim of imposing régimes which, as had been demonstrated, did not meet the needs of contemporary societies.

19. Mr. MEZZALAMA (Italy), speaking on behalf of the 12 States members of the European Community in explanation of vote before the vote, said that the Twelve unequivocally condemned the recruitment, use and financing of mercenaries and understood fully the concerns which has prompted the submission of the draft resolution. Nevertheless, for substantive reasons and on principle, they could not endorse the text. The draft resolution welcomed the adoption of the International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries and urged all States to sign, accede to or ratify the Convention. Yet, in drafting the text, the sponsors had introduced into the draft resolution controversial political issues which were inconsistent with the Convention itself and with the relevant resolution adopted by consensus by the Sixth Committee at the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly. The Twelve reiterated the objections that they had raised time and again with respect to the context in which the questions of mercenary activities were considered. In the opinion of the Twelve, those questions had to do with relations between States and were not human rights issues.

20. A recorded vote was taken on draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.10

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Gabon, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining: Australia, Austria, Bulgaria, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Malta, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Turkey.

21. Draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.10 was adopted by 105 votes to 10, with 20 abstentions.

22. Ms. OJAMAA (United States of America), speaking in explanation of vote, said that the United States, which had consistently opposed the recruitment, financing and use of mercenaries, had nevertheless repeatedly pointed out that the resolutions on mercenaries referred to issues which were totally unrelated to the purposes of the Third Committee and fell outside its sphere of competence. The draft resolution just adopted dealt with political issues which had nothing to do with the Committee's mandate. Her country was firmly opposed to any attempts to broaden, for exclusively political ends, the generally accepted definition. The definition of the word "mercenary" was contained in article 47, paragraph 2, of Protocol I additional to the 1949 Geneva Conventions and had been reaffirmed in the recently adopted International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries. Her delegation had therefore found it necessary to vote against the draft resolution.

23. Mr. de BRITO CRUZ (Brazil), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution because it strongly endorsed and agreed with the main thrust of the resolution. It had misgivings, however, with respect to the third and fifth preambular paragraphs. The statement in the third preambular paragraph was perhaps too general and might well lead to confusion. The conditions under which a dispute or situation could be considered to be a threat to international peace and security were clearly set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, which also specified the organ which should determine the existence of that threat. In the opinion of his delegation, when those elements were not present, any generalization, such as that in the third preambular paragraph of the resolution, should be avoided.

24. Although his delegation was also concerned about the phenomenon referred to in the fifth preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.10, it had doubts regarding the manner in which the paragraph had been formulated. The remarks that he had just made were intended solely to assist in the interpretation of those points to which he had referred, without prejudice to his delegation's full support for the main thrust of the draft resolution just adopted.

25. Mr. MIYATA (Japan), speaking in explanation of vote, said that while it understood that many countries wished to prevent the use of mercenaries for the purpose of destabilizing or overthrowing legitimately established Governments, his delegation objected to the wording of the draft resolution just adopted, which should reflect the provisions of the International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries. The Japanese delegation regretted that draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.10 was not an improvement on the Convention and, for that reason, had voted against it.

26. Mr. BURCUOGLU (Turkey), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his delegation had abstained in the vote. Deeply concerned about the use of mercenaries, his country prohibited its nationals from serving in foreign armed forces. Moreover, the recruitment, financing and training of mercenaries and their transit through Turkish territory was prohibited. He regretted that draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.10 was not consistent with the International Convention, which had been adopted by consensus.

27. Mr. PAPPALARDO (Paraguay), speaking in explanation of vote, said that, although his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution, it had reservations concerning paragraph 4.

28. Mr. MISOMALI (Malawi), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his delegation agreed with the substance of the draft resolution. His country had always been opposed to racism and racial discrimination, the worst manifestation of which was apartheid. He welcomed the positive changes that had so far taken place in South Africa towards abolishing apartheid. He could not, however, endorse certain aspects of the draft resolutions adopted in connection with the first cluster of items. His delegation's support for those draft resolutions must not be construed as signifying acceptance of regrettable elements such as selective condemnation, or some of the provisions of draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.6. Malawi

(Mr. Misomali, Malawi)

was opposed to any attempt by a State to destabilize another through the use of mercenaries and therefore it fully supported draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.10.

29. Mr. FURE (Norway), speaking in explanation of vote on behalf of the Nordic countries, said that, although those countries unequivocally condemned the use of mercenaries, they regretted that draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.10 did not properly reflect the International Convention. Furthermore, paragraph 3 bore no relation to international law. Consequently, the Nordic countries had not voted in favour of it.

30. Mr. KOTEY (Ghana) said that had he been present during the vote, he would have voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.10.

31. Mrs. GEBRE-EGZIABHER (Ethiopia) said that she fully supported draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.10 and, had she been present during the vote, would have voted in favour of it.

32. Mr. DORANI (Djibouti) said that he would have voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.10 if he had been present during the vote.

33. The CHAIRMAN invited delegations to comment on the draft resolutions adopted by the Committee.

34. Mrs. SYAHRUDDIN (Indonesia) said that Indonesia had been wrongly mentioned as a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.9.

35. Mrs. MATOVU (Uganda) reiterated the importance which Uganda attached to the right of peoples to self-determination, to the early granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples, to the effective safeguarding and observance of human rights and to the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination, including apartheid. It was regrettable that several delegations had voted against draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.10, or had abstained from voting, since the positive signs in South Africa were largely the result of the sanctions imposed, and to relax sanctions would only serve to undermine the results already achieved. It was therefore important to maintain and strengthen them until the total abolition of apartheid.

36. Miss FUNDAFUNDA (Zambia) thanked all the delegations which had supported the draft resolutions on the first cluster of items and said she wished to make some comments on the statements made by certain delegations in their explanations of vote. Several delegations, including those of the States members of the European Economic Community and those of Australia, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and Turkey, had said that the draft resolutions did not reflect recent events in South Africa or that the wording of certain texts did not take into account developments in that country. The delegation of Australia had said that draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.6 contained a repetition of the language of the past and that no account had been taken of the positive changes that had occurred recently, an opinion which her delegation did not share. The resolutions adopted

(Miss Fundafunda, Zambia)

were a faithful reflection of the present situation in South Africa and did take recent developments into account. The pillars of apartheid remained intact. The black population still did not have the right to vote and continued to be restricted to outlying and unproductive lands, while the white minority still owned and controlled 87 per cent of the land. The resolutions adopted did not reproduce mechanically the language of the past. They had been consciously and deliberately drafted and the delegation of Australia should have a better understanding of the motives and practices of the delegations which had supported those documents. Contrary to certain assertions, the means proposed in the draft resolutions for the elimination of apartheid were consistent with recent resolutions adopted by the General Assembly in that regard, including the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa, and resolution 44/244, which had been adopted by consensus. In particular, it should be recalled that, in the Declaration, the General Assembly had urged Member States not to relax sanctions against South Africa until there was clear evidence of irreversible changes in that country. Similarly, in resolution 44/244, the General Assembly had stated that South Africa should take further steps to implement the profound and irreversible changes called for in the Declaration. Consequently, by adopting the draft resolutions on the first cluster of items, the Committee had acted in full conformity with the decisions adopted by the General Assembly. The Declaration clearly stipulated the measures to be adopted by the Government of South Africa to eliminate the obstacles to the commencement of substantive negotiations with the representatives of the oppressed minority of South Africa. The Government of South Africa had so far adopted only some of those measures. Much remained to be done, therefore, before sanctions against South Africa could be eased. Zambia was not opposed to being selective when it was justified. However, the same delegations that were opposed to that practice in the Third Committee resorted to it in other United Nations bodies, including the Security Council and the Commission on Human Rights. To be credible, those delegations must be consistent and not selective.

37. Mr. STUART (Australia) said that he fully agreed with the delegation of Zambia that the question of apartheid continued to have top priority. He also agreed that the Third Committee's resolutions in that regard must be sincere and objective, and concurred with many of the comments just made by the representative of Zambia on the situation in South Africa. However, there had possibly been a misunderstanding on his delegation's statement in explanation of a vote at a previous meeting. He regretted that the representative of Zambia had not quoted his delegation's statement accurately but had based her remarks on the relevant press release, which had referred to that statement out of context. At the earlier meeting Australia had stated: "We recognize that the co-sponsors have amended the corresponding resolution from the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly as a result of developments in South Africa, but we consider that the draft does not sufficiently reflect the positive developments towards political and social change in that country".

38. Miss BOUMAIZA (Algeria) said that she agreed with the statement made by the delegation of Zambia and fervently hoped that the current changes in international relations would have a very positive impact on the political situation in Palestine and South Africa.

39. Mrs. ZINDOGA (Zimbabwe) said that she agreed with the statements made by the delegations of Zambia and Uganda. No compromise was possible on matters of principle, unless those principles were abandoned. That was why the request had been made to maintain sanctions against South Africa until apartheid had been abolished. That request had been formulated by the delegations of the countries directly affected by South Africa's inhuman policy. The principle of self-determination must not be applied selectively, but for the benefit of all the peoples of the world, and must not, therefore, become a source of controversy between the North and the South like the controversy between East and West during the cold war. It was regrettable that some delegations had sought to subsume the principle of self-determination under North-South parameters, with a view to weakening the Committee's resolve in its struggle against racism, racial discrimination and apartheid.

40. Mrs. GARUBA (Nigeria) said that she agreed with the statements made by the delegations of Algeria, Uganda and Zambia and reiterated the position of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.10 that the question of mercenaries was related to human rights. Those representatives who in 1989 had called for the adoption of the International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries now said that the question of mercenaries fell outside the terms of reference of the Third Committee and that it was a legal matter and was therefore the province of the Sixth Committee. Nigeria believed that although the legal aspects of the International Convention might fall within the terms of reference of the Sixth Committee, the question of mercenaries, as it related to human rights, should be considered in the Third Committee.

41. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had completed its consideration of item 103 and the first cluster of agenda items.

AGENDA ITEM 101: ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (continued) (A/C.3/45/L.22)

Draft resolution A/C.3/43/L.22

42. Mr. SKIBSTED (Denmark), introducing the draft resolution, said that Romania and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic had joined the sponsors. The sponsors, who had taken as their basis the texts of General Assembly resolution 44/73, Economic and Social Council resolution 1990/17 and resolution 34/6 of the Commission on the Status of Women, had also been concerned to ensure that the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women should receive sufficient resources to carry out its work. Consequently, in paragraph 10 of the draft resolution the Secretary-General was requested to continue his efforts to provide secretariat staff, including legal staff members expert in human rights treaty implementation. Paragraph 11 supported the Committee's view that the

(Mr. Skibsted, Denmark)

Secretary-General should accord higher priority to strengthening technical and substantive support for the Committee and, to that end, in paragraph 12 the Secretary-General was requested to undertake a comprehensive review of the resources available and necessary for that purpose, as well as for the effective implementation of all other aspects of the programme on the advancement of women and to report thereon to the Assembly at its forty-sixth session. The efforts made by the Committee to rationalize its procedures, expedite the consideration of periodic reports and develop procedures and guidelines for the consideration of subsequent reports were welcomed, as was the establishment of the pre-session working group of the Committee to consider second and subsequent periodic reports. In paragraph 14 the Secretary-General was requested to continue to provide, facilitate and encourage the dissemination of public information relating to the Committee, its recommendations, the Convention and the concept of legal literacy. In conclusion, he said it was the hope of the sponsors that the draft resolution would be adopted without a vote.

43. Mr. SARR (Mali), referring to the second line of paragraph 12 of the French text of draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.22, asked for an explanation of the meaning of the word "présession".

44. The CHAIRMAN said that the word should have been "ressources" rather than "présession", and that there was no need for a correction in the other languages.

AGENDA ITEM 102: FORWARD-LOOKING STRATEGIES FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN TO THE YEAR 2000 (continued) (A/C.3/45/L.19)

Draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.19

45. Mrs. McLENNAN (United States of America), introducing the draft resolution, said that Guinea, Poland, Yugoslavia and Zaire had joined the sponsors. She referred to the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations concerning the qualifications required of the staff of the Organization and the complete absence of restrictions on the eligibility of men and women on a basis of equality. Given those principles, and the fact that in the 20 years that had elapsed since the adoption of the first resolution on the employment of women in the Professional category the General Assembly had adopted 30 resolutions on the item, it should not have been necessary to submit a new draft resolution calling for equality of opportunity for women.

46. Although the draft resolution advocated an overall participation rate for women of 35 per cent by 1995 throughout the United Nations system, particularly in senior policy-level and decision-making posts, it did not attempt to introduce quotas or preference schemes that did not take into account the merit principle. Rather, it sought to secure a high degree of commitment on the part of the Organization to the full and equitable participation of women in the work of the Secretariat. The sponsors believed that Member States should nominate more women candidates for vacant posts and prepare rosters of candidates and send them to the United Nations Secretariat, the governing bodies of the specialized agencies and

(Mrs. McLennan, United States)

the regional commissions. They also endorsed the Secretary-General's concept of wider and more aggressive campaigns to identify recruitment sources and qualified candidates, especially women candidates. The draft resolution sought to remove any bias in selection procedures that might prevent women from being judged on their merits. The Secretariat should make a commitment at the highest level to institute practical measures and ensure that machinery was established to implement the action programme, under the direction of a senior-level official who would be responsible for enforcing it. In addition, there should be a comprehensive evaluation and analysis of the main obstacles to equal participation by women in the work of the Organization, with a view to the establishment of an action programme to overcome those obstacles, making full use of existing budgetary resources. Steps must be taken to deal with such problems as career development, the uneven distribution of women in posts subject to geographical distribution, the small proportion of women from developing countries, the percentage of women recruited, which was considerably lower than that of men, and the fact that in general women were not recruited for senior-level posts.

47. The sponsors believed that the draft resolution would assist in fulfilling the provisions of the United Nations Charter and the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, and hoped that it would be adopted by consensus.

Draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.20

48. Mrs. SAINT-LOUIS (Canada), introducing draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.20 on women and literacy, said that Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Finland, Mali, Mongolia, Nepal and Samoa had joined the sponsors. After mentioning the commendable efforts made during International Literacy Year by the organizations and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, Governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, she pointed out that two thirds of the people around the world who could not read or write were women. The draft resolution submitted was based in part on resolution 34/8 of the Commission on the Status of Women and reference was made in it to two important events of 1990, namely, the World Conference on Education for All and the World Summit for Children, as well as the link between female literacy and the success of national population policies. The resolution also recognized the paragraphs in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in which States Parties committed themselves to take action to ensure equal access to education for women and men, and requested the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to pay particular attention to measures taken by Governments to that end. It also requested the Secretary-General to prepare a report on the progress made at all levels in increasing female literacy for submission to the World Conference on Women in 1995 and, in his next update to the World Survey on the Role of Women in Development, to examine specifically the relationship between the literacy of women and their economic and social advancement. The sponsors hoped that the draft resolution would receive wide support and be adopted by consensus.

Draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.21

49. Mr. KRENKEL (Austria), introducing draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.21 on interregional consultation on women in public life, said that Bangladesh, Cameroon and New Zealand had asked to be added to the list of sponsors. The draft resolution recalled that, in its resolution 44/77 of 8 December 1989, the General Assembly had endorsed the convening in 1991 of an interregional consultation on women in public life. It would have the General Assembly decide that the consultation should be an intergovernmental meeting, and urge all Governments to participate actively in the consultation and to designate for that purpose women who held leadership positions in Government and national institutions and organizations or were considered to have the potential for high public office. It went on to invite Governments and national institutions and organizations to provide extrabudgetary resources to facilitate preparations for the consultation, especially the participation of least developed countries. Finally, it requested the Secretary-General to take steps to assure the necessary servicing and support of the consultation and to transmit its conclusions in a report to the Secretary-General at its forty-sixth session.

Draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.24

50. Mrs. SIHARUDIN (India) introduced draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.24 on behalf of the member countries of the Consultative Committee of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). The Fund had an important role to play in helping to increase opportunities and options for women in developing countries through activities designed to create an awareness of the inclusion of women's issues in the mainstream development efforts of Governments, United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. The draft resolution welcomed the development of new strategies for the Fund's programme management and encouraged its efforts to document and share its experiences in the context of increasing emphasis on the human development dimension of technical co-operation. It also urged Governments and public and private donors to continue to strengthen the Fund's financial and technical capacities and asked the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session on the activities of the Fund. Since the Consultative Committee of UNIFEM was appointed on the basis of geographical distribution, the Secretary-General was asked to explore the possibility of providing conference services in the relevant working languages so that all Consultative Committee members could participate fully in its work. The sponsors hoped that, as in previous years, the draft resolution would be adopted without a vote.

Draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.25

51. Mrs. ASHTON (Bolivia), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, introduced draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.25, entitled Implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women. The draft resolution recalled and reaffirmed previously adopted resolutions on the importance of immediate implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies. It emphasized the important contribution made in that regard by the Commission on the Status of

(Mrs. Ashton, Bolivia)

Women, the specialized agencies, the regional commissions and other organizations and bodies of the United Nations, as well as by non-governmental organizations. It also reaffirmed the recommendations and conclusions arising from the first review and appraisal of the implementation of the Strategies, especially paragraph 2, which pointed to the need to accelerate implementation.

52. As the preparatory body for the world conference, the Commission on the Status of Women was asked to decide on the venue of the conference not later than 1992, to base its decision with regard to conference documentation on Economic and Social Council resolution 1990/9, and to focus the agenda on the Strategies, as well as on the recommendations and conclusions of the first review and appraisal. In addition, the Secretary-General was asked to appoint the secretary-general of the Conference not later than 1992. Emphasis was placed on the need to give attention to redressing socio-economic inequities, as well as on the total integration of women in the development process, based on the specific and urgent needs of the developing countries. That integration should be accomplished through specific targets established by Member States for the purpose of increasing the representation of women in professional, management and decision-making positions. For their part, Governments should give priority to women in proposing candidates to fill vacancies in the United Nations Secretariat, especially at the decision-making level. At the same time, the Secretary-General was asked to give special consideration to female candidates from underrepresented and unrepresented developing countries in reviewing those candidatures. The draft resolution also noted the convening in 1991 of a high-level interregional consultation on women in public life.

53. She drew the attention of the Committee to the first line of paragraph 7 of the English version, which should read "priority theme" instead of "priority themes". Also, in the fourth line of the same paragraph, a comma should be inserted after "1994". The countries of the Group of 77 hoped that, as on previous occasions, the draft resolution would be adopted without a vote

AGENDA ITEM 108: INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO COMBAT DRUG ABUSE AND ILLICIT TRAFFICKING

54. Ms. HAARSTAD (Norway), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, said that, with the current revival of multilateralism, the United Nations was in the best position ever to play the constructive role envisaged in the Charter. In the area of combating drug abuse and the threat that it represented to the economic and social development of many countries, the work of the United Nations played a fundamental role, one which had been recognized, moreover, in recent meetings such as the Cartegena Conference and the London World Ministerial Summit, in April 1990. That work was exemplified by the holding of the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly in February 1990 and by the priority given to the drug problem during the current session. There was agreement among all nations that the drug problem could not be solved without effective international co-operation, which would make it easier to exchange ideas and experiences, co-ordinate efforts to combat illicit production and trafficking, reduce illicit demand and provide support for the countries that were most affected by narcotics

(Ms. Haarstad, Norway)

production and trade or lacked the resources needed to confront the increase in illicit drug use.

55. Regrettably, the global situation showed no signs of improvement. The production of illegal narcotics was still increasing, and illicit trafficking was spreading, not only in the industrialized countries but in the developing countries. As a result, drug addicts constituted one of the world's highest risk groups for HIV infection. In addition to causing human suffering and family disruption, drug addiction had very serious economic and social effects: it accounted for the rise in drug-related crime, the need for treatment and rehabilitation services and the loss of manpower. Moreover, some countries were experiencing distortions in their overall economy as a result of illicit drug trafficking, the monetary value of which might now be greater than that of international trade in oil and second only to the arms trade.

56. The Nordic countries had noted with interest and generally supported the recommendations and proposals put forward in the report of the Secretary-General on the enhancement of the efficiency of the United Nations structure for drug abuse control. They believed that the United Nations was in a position to fulfil its mandate in the field of narcotic drugs, based on the knowledge and experience obtained through instruments such as the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances, the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, the Global Programme of Action, the 1987 Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control, the Political Declaration adopted by the General Assembly at its seventeenth special session and the Declaration adopted at the World Ministerial Summit to Reduce the Demand for Drugs and to Combat the Cocaine Threat.

57. Referring to the recommendations of the Expert Group on which the report of the Secretary-General was based, she said that, in the view of the Nordic countries, the proposed single executive structure for Treaty implementation, operational research activities and policy formulation, should be based in Vienna and integrate the three existing secretariats. Moreover, it should be headed by a senior official devoted exclusively to co-ordinating United Nations activities in the field. With respect to funding, regular budget funds currently allocated to the International Narcotics Control Board and the Division of Narcotic Drugs should be maintained. Operational activities should also be funded from the regular budget, but, for the time being, the only realistic option seemed to be to continue financing those activities through voluntary contributions.

58. The Nordic countries believed that before the Economic and Social Council introduced changes in the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, as recommended by the Expert Group, a discussion should be held on the matter in the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. They agreed that an advisory board for liaisons with Governments and regions should be selected from among the members of the Commission.

(Ms. Haarstad, Norway)

59. Referring to the implementation of the Global Programme of Action adopted by the General Assembly at its seventeenth special session, he said that the United Nations could carry out vital work in support of information and preventive measures and treatment and rehabilitation activities undertaken at the national level. The World Health Organization's new strategy and programme of action in the field of demand reduction was an example of such work. The United Nations could also provide assistance to many countries in suppressing the supply of illegal drugs and illicit trafficking at the borders through regional conventions such as the new European Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime. The activities of the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control designed to promote joint drug control actions by States at the subregional level were of paramount importance and required more substantial contributions from States.

60. Mr. JOUSHAN (Afghanistan) said that in recent years, the illicit production, trafficking and use of narcotic drugs had become a problem which was international in scope and was beyond the capacity of individual States to resolve. It must therefore be solved by concerted action.

61. The Republic of Afghanistan, the first country to sign the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, had launched an unprecedented campaign against that deadly phenomenon. In the particular case of Afghanistan, it was a phenomenon aggravated by the prolongation of the war and the participation of the Afghan opposition leaders stationed in Pakistan in illicit drug trafficking with the support of Pakistani military circles and international organized crime. By presidential decree of May 1990, a High National Commission to Combat Illicit Production, Trafficking and Abuse of Narcotic Drugs had been established under the chairmanship of one of the Vice-Presidents of the Republic. The Commission had already elaborated a nation-wide programme to co-ordinate the national and international activities of the ministries concerned. In the past four years, the Afghan authorities had seized considerable quantities of narcotic drugs and in the first half of 1990 alone, had seized more than 1,900 kilograms of narcotic drugs, destroyed narcotic drug crops over a 60-hectare area and placed hundreds of drug addicts in rehabilitation centres. The people had been informed of the harm and danger of drug abuse through seminars in schools and universities and mass media campaigns. The Government would soon draft a special law and other legal drug control instruments and would establish special courts and attorneys for the severe punishment of narcotic drug producers and traffickers.

62. Afghanistan wanted to co-operate with the United Nations and all countries, in particular, its neighbouring States, in order to root out drugs. Its determination was borne out by the agreement on reducing the demand for narcotic drugs which President Najibullah had signed with the Government of India on his recent visit to that country. President Najibullah, with the support of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control, had also proposed the establishment of a special commission composed of representatives of Afghanistan and Pakistan, concerned Western countries and the United States to draft a comprehensive plan of action designed to eradicate the illicit supply and

(Mr. Joushan, Afghanistan)

traffic of drugs from the border areas of the two neighbouring countries. Moreover, the President of Afghanistan had proposed convening an international or regional conference under United Nations auspices, in order to step up the fight against the illicit production, trafficking and use of narcotic drugs in the region. His delegation also wished to request the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC) to set up an office in Afghanistan.

63. Mr. SAOUDI (Algeria) said that the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly devoted to the question of international co-operation against the illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances was proof positive of the international community's awareness that the scourge of drugs was serious and a danger to the socio-economic structures and human potential of nations. Although the Global Programme of Action and the Political Declaration adopted by the special session provided by the international community with the methods of undertaking cohesive action in the fight to eradicate that scourge, it must not be forgotten that the United Nations required sufficient financial resources for their effective implementation.

64. The international community should intensify its aid to the developing countries which had taken vigorous measures to reduce and eliminate the supply of narcotic drugs; the cultivation of drug crops had increased as a result of the deteriorating economic and social situation which had been brought about by the unjust international economic order, in particular by the steady fall in prices of traditional agricultural products on markets made inaccessible by protectionist policies.

65. The United Nations bore the principal responsibility for co-ordinating the fight against narcotic drugs, and the units involved in that work should be centralized through the establishment of a co-ordinating body, as proposed in document A/45/652/Add.1. That would give a new impetus to drug control and increase its effectiveness. In addition, it would free the United Nations of the burden resulting from a multiplicity of structures. Algeria supported the proposal contained in General Assembly resolution 44/141 of 15 December 1989, in which the Assembly recognized the need to adopt a more comprehensive approach to international drug control and a more efficient and co-ordinated structure in that field in order to enable the United Nations to play the central and greatly increased role necessary for countering the extraordinary rise in drug abuse.

66. Co-operation between the United Nations and Governments in drug control should be reviewed in order to expedite the Organization's administrative processes. There was a need to simplify the questionnaires which Governments had to fill in as a part of their implementation of the seven objectives contained in chapter I of the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control; moreover, the number of such questionnaires should be reduced in order to ensure the speedy implementation of the Global Programme of Action.

67. Algeria had just set up a national committee to combat illicit drug trafficking and had taken preventive, deterrent and repressive measures. At the regional level, Algeria had signed bilateral and regional agreements on

(Mr. Saoudi, Algeria)

co-operation, concerted action and exchange of information with neighbouring countries and countries on the northern shores of the Mediterranean. Algeria reiterated its support for the decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its seventeenth special session, as well as its determination to co-operate in joint efforts to eliminate drugs. Co-operation must be established, and solidarity maintained in order to achieve the proposed objectives of protecting humanity from the danger of illicit drug trafficking.

68. Mr. SAVLE (Yugoslavia) said that his delegation shared the deep concern over the acute and growing problem of the illicit demand, production, trafficking and consumption of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. Of no less importance were the negative effects of those phenomena on family life, local communities and society as a whole. It was therefore understandable that in recent years the international community had been paying increasing attention to that problem.

69. The problem was primarily social, and was exacerbated by the vast disparities existing in the present-day world. On the one hand, enormous affluence bred an insatiable demand while, on the other, poverty and social and cultural backwardness were the source of an inexhaustible supply. International criminals took advantage of those disparities in order to make huge profits from illicit trafficking and become, in some parts of the world, parallel powers and an increasing threat to the economic systems of sovereign States. Assistance should therefore be provided to developing countries in order to enable them to speed up their economic development and secure access for their goods to the markets of the developed world; that was the only way to prevent the illicit cultivation of plants used in the production of narcotic drugs.

70. As a transit country and a traditional cultivator of opium poppies for medicinal purposes, Yugoslavia had long been interested in organized international action to combat illicit drug trafficking and drug abuse. That shared responsibility required broad international co-operation and the adoption of effective and constructive measures which would not diminish countries' sovereignty or cultural identity. Yugoslavia had been one of the first countries to sign the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, in December 1988.

71. The documents adopted at the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in 1987 and at the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly, held early in 1990, required a collective response from the entire international community. At the seventeenth special session, Yugoslavia had proposed that part of the developing countries' external debt should be written off in favour of the implementation of projects from the Global Programme of Action. It had also proposed that the highly developed countries should support the action financially from their significant balance-of-payments surpluses. Because it required considerable financial and technical assistance in order to succeed, such action should be supported not only by the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control but also by the World Health Organization (WHO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other international organizations.

(Mr. Savle, Yugoslavia)

72. Yugoslavia supported the Secretary-General's efforts and his organizational changes to make United Nations agencies in the field of narcotics more efficient in co-ordinating and directing the implementation of the Global Programme of Action. The fight against drugs required not only good management, structures and programmes; it also depended Governments' willingness to co-operate with the United Nations.

73. Miss JUNEJO (Pakistan) said that her country was one of the signatories of the Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, which would enter into force on 11 November 1990, after ratification by 20 countries. In addition to launching new initiatives and implementing them, it was necessary to make maximum use of existing mechanisms in the United Nations system. No strategy to combat the drug problem would succeed unless the problem was addressed in its entirety and in all its manifestations. It was not sufficient to put an end to illicit cultivation, production and trafficking. The problem of the demand for drugs must be addressed with equal enthusiasm and seriousness. That problem had been analysed thoroughly at the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly, and had subsequently been the subject of the Declaration adopted in London in April 1990 at the World Ministerial Summit to Reduce the Demand for Drugs and to Combat the Cocaine Threat.

74. Since the drug problem had assumed international proportions, it was clear that only the United Nations could organize a collective response. However, the tasks entrusted to it in the main instruments, conventions or resolutions on the subject were beyond the capacity of its current structure and human and financial resources. Consequently, not only a structural reorganization, but also an increase in resources was needed. Pakistan commended the work of the Group of Experts appointed by the Secretary-General, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 44/141, to assist him in enhancing the efficiency of the United Nations structure for drug abuse control. Pakistan, which had also studied with interest the report of the Secretary-General on the subject (A/45/652), concurred in principle with the recommendation to establish a unified Secretariat unit for drug abuse control, whose head would be directly accountable to the Secretary-General. The unit would of course maintain a close working relationship with the other relevant organs of the United Nations system.

75. At a time when the drug problem was threatening to take over entire societies, the main international units responsible for combating drug abuse were facing severe financial constraints. It was necessary to ensure that they had sufficient budgetary resources to perform the additional tasks entrusted to them by the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, the Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, and the Political Declaration and Global Programme of Action adopted at the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly. The Organization's current financial difficulties must not adversely affect its important activities in the area of drug abuse control.

(Miss Junejo, Pakistan)

76. Her Government's efforts focused on reducing the supply of drugs and limiting illicit trafficking. To that end, cultivation, production, processing and trafficking of illicit drugs were being eradicated, and emphasis was being placed on the treatment and rehabilitation of addicts and on community intervention in the field of drug abuse. Fuller powers had been given to Pakistan's Narcotics Control Board, now known as the Narcotics Control Division, and its resources had been increased. Modern methods and techniques for monitoring drug trafficking had been introduced, and a number of law enforcement agencies were co-operating among themselves in that regard. Her Government was co-operating fully with the international drug abuse control bodies and was actively engaged in preparing plans for crop substitution in areas of Pakistan in which opium poppies had traditionally been grown. Opium production in those usually inaccessible areas had fallen by about 36.5 per cent, while areas under opium poppy cultivation had been reduced by 49.5 per cent.

77. Legislation was being amended to make it possible to confiscate assets acquired with income derived from drug trafficking. Her Government was participating actively in demand reduction programmes, with the assistance of the World Health Organization, the International Labour Organisation and the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control. While demand reduction was a long-term objective and overnight success could not be expected, the corresponding programmes in Pakistan so far seemed to be progressing satisfactorily. As a back-up to those programmes, the Government had launched a major campaign in the media, to alert the public to the dangers of drugs.

78. In co-operation with the Government, two personalities with a following among young people had started up an organization called Battle Against Narcotics to encourage drug demand reduction among young people between the ages of 13 and 30, using a two-pronged approach of information and rehabilitation. The campaign, which was being carried out through the national media, was accompanied by highly publicized fund-raising activities.

79. The Islamabad Declaration of the Fourth Summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation had announced that 1989 would be the year of action to combat drug abuse. Her Government had instructed the Narcotics Control Division to prepare a plan of action for implementing the Declaration. Pakistan headed the Association's technical committee on prevention of drug trafficking and drug abuse.

80. The international community should provide economic assistance to farmers in areas where opium poppies were cultivated, so as to facilitate crop substitution and create employment opportunities, industry and income-generating activities in the areas affected. It should help to strengthen law enforcement agencies in the areas of training, mobility, equipment and operating costs, and should provide assistance to drug demand reduction programmes, including treatment of addicts, education for prevention and other preventive measures.

81. Mr. PIBULSONGGRAM (Thailand) said that illicit drug trafficking was one of the most serious threats to societies and had assumed such alarming proportions at every level of the economic, social and political structure that States were no longer able to combat the problem unassisted. International co-operation was thus of the utmost importance in eradicating that global scourge. Thus far, the international community had responded with commendable decision and energy. The topic of drug abuse had been one of the most important items at the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly. The specific proposals presented had led to the convening of the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly in February 1990, at which the Political Declaration and Global Programme of Action had been unanimously adopted. The World Ministerial Summit to Reduce the Demand for Drugs and to Combat the Cocaine Threat, held in London, had also unanimously adopted the London Declaration, which laid down practical measures for combating drug abuse. Action complementing the two meetings had included constructive measures by various United Nations organs and was to be commended. Thailand hoped that the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 would provide a basis for more co-ordinated system-wide action, and welcomed the most recent revisions to the plan, which took into account the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and the Economic and Social Council. The Secretary-General was to be warmly commended in that regard.

82. In 1990, the focus would perhaps shift to enhancing the efficiency of the United Nations structure for drug abuse control. A more efficient structure must be established. Thailand therefore fully supported the creation of a unified secretariat unit for that purpose. The Head of Thailand's Narcotics Control Board had participated actively in the work on that issue, as a member of the Group of Experts appointed by the Secretary-General. Also worthy of mention were the valuable recommendations contained in the reports of the Secretary-General and the Group of Experts (A/45/652 and Add.1), and the proposal to set up a unified secretariat structure for international drug control at Vienna. His delegation called for immediate implementation of the plans prepared in that regard.

83. His Government attached the highest priority to demand reduction and the elimination of supply. Thailand had set up a unit to combat the cultivation of narcotic drugs in the mountain regions, and a basic plan for community development and the environment which included projects for improving living standards among mountain tribes, with emphasis on housing, food, health care and education. As an incentive to abandoning the production of illicit crops, modern farming techniques and a variety of substitute crops had been introduced. Mountain tribes were also receiving instruction in marketing, and their direct access to suitable markets for their produce was being facilitated. As a result of those measures, opium production had fallen by 43 per cent since 1981.

84. New projects were currently under way to combat drug crop cultivation, covering a total of 100,000 inhabitants in six villages. Four of those projects were being financed by the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC), to which Thailand expressed its gratitude.

(Mr. Pibulsonggram, Thailand)

85. In regard to the demand for drugs, Thailand had embarked on a preventive education campaign which included workshops, seminars, demonstrations and media information campaigns in addition to education at all levels. Priority was also being given to the treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts, of whom there were 300,000 in Thailand.

86. Thailand's geographical proximity, its relatively well-developed infrastructure and its transport network had made it a favoured route for drug trafficking in the region. Greater international co-operation was therefore required to suppress such trafficking and regional co-operation was essential to the success of national efforts in that area. He proposed that a high-level regional conference should be convened under the auspices of the United Nations to consider the question of drug abuse and illicit trafficking in South-East Asia and expressed satisfaction that UNFDAC, ESCAP, the Colombo Plan Bureau and Japan had expressed interest in providing financial support for the convening of a conference in Bangkok in early 1991. A meeting of that type would serve as a model for future co-operative efforts in other regions and subregions.

87. Mr. WARANDI (Fiji) said that the destructive effects of drug abuse and illicit trafficking had been compounded by the alarming increase in AIDS in relation to intravenous drug-taking. Following the 1987 International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, concerted efforts had been made to generate action to combat drug abuse at the national, regional and international levels and to encourage the adoption of multidisciplinary strategies. However, the measures taken had been halting, intermittent and plagued by considerations of national political expediency. The 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances had provided the legal framework for national and international co-operation to regulate and reinforce the narcotics control system. It was becoming increasingly apparent that if the decade of the nineties was to mark a turning-point in international drug abuse control, there must be better multilateral co-operation.

88. A universal approach was necessary to break the vicious circle of drug producers, unscrupulous distributors and consumers. In countries where drug production was an important income-producing activity, measures such as crop substitution and rural development schemes should be accepted as international obligations. The Political Declaration and Global Programme of Action adopted in February and the proclamation of the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse were important starting-points.

89. Fiji's strategic location in the South Pacific made it a potential transit point for drug trafficking. Recognizing the potential threat, Fiji had adopted new national policies. The Government had established a national bureau of substance abuse and control directly linked to national enforcement agencies and with the mandate to prevent the importation, production and use of illicit drugs. Fiji had also established educational programmes to heighten public awareness of the dangers of drug abuse. It had participated in regional drug programmes organized by the Colombo Plan Bureau and in the forum established by the chiefs of police of the

(Mr. Warandi, Fiji)

region to exchange data and views on drug abuse and trafficking. Close links were being maintained with INTERPOL and other international drug enforcement agencies in a concerted effort to curb the drug trade in the region. He expressed gratitude for the assistance provided by UNFDAC and called on all States to continue financial support of the Fund.

90. The establishment of systems for the collation and exchange of information on drug trafficking and drug dependence brought a solution to the problem closer. The programmes devised by United Nations organs to strengthen national legal systems and activate international co-operation were beginning to pay dividends.

91. Mrs. SKOWRON-OLSZOWSKA (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) said that, according to the mandate given to it by its member States at the 1989 General Conference and, more recently, by the United Nations General Assembly at its seventeenth special session, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) contributed to the United Nations strategy against drug abuse while at the same time maintaining its specific role which was to prevent drug abuse through education.

92. UNESCO had taken part in the drafting of the System-wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control. At the recent inter-agency meeting in Geneva in September 1990, UNESCO had proposed the inclusion of General Conference resolution 1.14 in the text of the Plan and had offered to initiate, with other agencies, an international workshop for teachers on preventive education. In collaboration with the World Health Organization, UNESCO had developed a documentation centre for the education of young people in schools, with particular regard to HIV infection connected with intravenous drug use. UNESCO had also helped draft the questionnaire sent by the Division of Narcotic Drugs to assess progress achieved in the prevention and reduction of drug demand. In co-operation with UNFDAC, UNESCO had provided technical support for the implementation of preventive education projects funded by UNFDAC in Ghana, Senegal and Myanmar. UNESCO and UNFDAC were preparing a joint project to examine the resources and shortcomings of drug-abuse preventive education in certain pilot countries with the aim of producing regional and subregional "guides" for the implementation of educational strategies and activities, such as preventive techniques incorporated in school curricula, use of community structures and media campaigns. Within the framework of its participation programme, UNESCO had approved earlier in 1990 a request for financial assistance from the Argentine Ministry of Education and Justice for a "drugs and prevention" project designed to train and heighten the awareness of target groups in and outside schools. Also, a contract had been concluded with the Argentine University of La Plata, for training the University's teaching staff in drug-abuse prevention education.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

THIRD COMMITTEE
32nd meeting
held on
Tuesday, 6 November 1990
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 32nd MEETING

Chairman: Ms. COOMBS (New Zealand)
(Vice-Chairman)

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In the absence of the Chairman, Ms. Coombs (New Zealand), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 108: INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO COMBAT DRUG ABUSE AND ILLICIT TRAFFICKING (continued) (A/45/3, chap. V, sect. D, A/45/301, A/45/303, A/45/329, A/45/495, A/45/535, A/45/536, A/45/542, A/45/652 and Add.1; A/C.3/45/4 and E/1990/39/Add.1)

1. Mr. AL-JABIR (Qatar) said that the scourge of drug abuse and illicit trafficking was becoming worse, with disastrous consequences for individuals, especially the young, and for States, whether they were producers, consumers or transit zones. Drugs hampered economic development and contributed to the spread of AIDS. General Assembly resolution 43/122 had emphasized that the connections between drug trafficking and international criminal organizations and the violence and corruption associated with them were highly detrimental to the democratic institutions, national security and economic, social and cultural structures of States. The United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances had recognized that illicit traffic was an international criminal activity which undermined the political foundations of States. That had prompted the General Assembly to consider the establishment of an international criminal code for such crimes.

2. Recent developments in communications, transport, production, marketing and financing had meant that illicit traffic in drugs had become a source of profits second only to the illicit traffic in arms, and both were connected to international terrorism. Drug traffickers in Colombia had carried out armed attacks against government drug enforcement agencies and officials. He commended the efforts of the Colombian Government to combat those gangs and urged the world community to provide financial and technical assistance to eliminate that evil.

3. Qatar supported all international efforts to suppress illicit trafficking and had acceded to the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, even though the strict observance of Islamic precepts in Qatar meant that drugs were not a social problem in that country. His delegation was confident that the Convention would enhance international co-operation and strengthen exisitng international instruments, and attached great importance to the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control. International efforts to combat illicit traffic should be focused along three main lines: first, severe penalties for drug traffickers, including confiscation of the proceeds from illicit trafficking and greater control of the movements of traffickers in accordance with the Convention and other relevant international instruments; secondly, with regard to consumption, intensive public awareness campaigns and prevention programmes aimed at reducing the demand for drugs, the provision of jobs and education to youth, and treatment and rehabilitatic for drug addicts; thirdly, with regard to production, assistance to drug-growing countries seeking to replace their production with legal crops. That could only be done by increasing financial assistance, ensuring greater access to

(Mr. Al-Jabir, Qatar)

international markets for such legal crops and providing job opportunities and education for the youth. He commended the activities of the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control as a major source of multilateral funding and technical co-operation. The drug problem was not analogous to natural disasters, which were beyond human control; it was created by people and he hoped that the concerted action of people would be able to eradicate it.

4. Mr. CHEN Shiquiu (China) stressed the need for greater international co-operation in combating drug-related criminal activity. The producing, consuming and transit countries had a shared responsibility to participate in international and regional co-operation aimed at controlling drug abuse. In that connection, it was essential to observe the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law and to respect national sovereignty. Developing countries encountered greater difficulties in drug abuse control because of their social and economic problems. They therefore required greater economic and technical assistance within the framework of international co-operation. Efforts to eliminate illicit drug production and trafficking must be complemented by a reduction in demand. The drug-consuming States should strive to reduce the demand for illicit drugs by adopting comprehensive measures through legislation, administration and rehabilitation.

5. The United Nations must play a greater role in implementing the relevant conventions and action plans, co-ordinating international drug control efforts and providing more technical and material assistance to Member States. His delegation agreed with the views put forward in the report of the Secretary-General on enhancement of the efficiency of the United Nations structure for drug abuse control (A/45/652) and supported the amalgamation of the three existing Secretariat units into a single executive structure. In that regard, greater attention should be given to operational activities without prejudice to other functions. The new structure should co-operate closely with the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs and be provided with adequate human and financial resources.

6. The entry into force of the Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances should provide another useful weapon in the war against drugs. China called upon all States that had not yet done so to accede to the Convention as speedily as possible and underscored the need to take concrete measures to ensure the implementation of all relevant international instruments in the field.

7. Recently, international drug syndicates, taking advantage of the geographical proximity of China's south-western border to the Golden Triangle, had carried out drug trafficking activities inside his country. The Chinese Government was giving great attention to the problem and the authorities concerned had intensified interdiction and rehabilitation efforts. China was amending its national legislation concerning drug-related crimes in accordance with the 1988 Convention with the aim of prescribing severe penalties for such crimes.

(Mr. Chen Shiqiu, China)

8. His Government had actively participated in international co-operation in the field of narcotics control, and strongly supported the work of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the International Narcotics Control Board. In recent years, China had co-operated with United Nations drug control agencies, especially the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control. Through joint efforts with the Fund and other countries in the region, it hoped to strengthen drug abuse control in the area of the Golden Triangle and enhance China's capability in drug interdiction and rehabilitation.

9. Mr. DE LA SABLIERE (France) said that the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly and the numerous international meetings held in 1990 on drug abuse control had laid the basis for greater international co-operation in the coming decade. The great increase in drug production was linked to the low prices for raw materials, the diminishing share of developing countries in international trade and lower purchasing power in those countries as a result of the economic crisis affecting them. The various United Nations conventions relating to drug abuse provided clear guidelines for the measures to be taken by all States, producer, transit and consumer countries alike.

10. In May 1990, France had adopted a national action plan to combat drug abuse aimed at reducing the demand for drugs, strengthening means for suppressing illicit drug trafficking and use, rehabilitating and reintegrating drug addicts, and preventing money laundering.

11. The international effort to combat drug abuse must be viewed as the shared responsibility of all States. In that connection, the question of economic and financial assistance for crop substitution must be given careful consideration. Transit countries which were unable to control drug trafficking must be provided with support. The training of police, legal, pharmaceutical and education personnel must be strengthened in order to conduct a broad-based prevention policy. International co-operation must include all countries and focus on their specific problems.

12. The United Nations Office at Vienna required greater support from Member States. The role of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs should be expanded and its effectiveness should be enhanced. In pursuance of its mandate, the Commission should become the focal point for international co-operation in drug abuse control.

13. In the interest of better co-ordination of United Nations drug control measures, the current structural reform should lead to the establishment of an operational body to ensure close collaboration between the various specialized agencies and institutions. The plan for drug abuse control should cover the entire United Nations system and the necessary funds must be allocated to ensure its success.

14. Mrs. KABA-CAMARA (Côte d'Ivoire) said that only the United Nations was able to co-ordinate international efforts aimed at drug abuse control. While the report of the Group of Experts on enhancement of the efficiency of the United Nations

(Mrs. Kaba-Camara, Côte d'Ivoire)

structure for drug abuse control (A/45/652/Add.1) was a valuable contribution, it was questionable that a new structure could prove successful unless the question of financing activities to control drug abuse was resolved. The confiscated property of drug traffickers and funds that had been frozen in Western financial institutions because they were linked to drug trafficking could be used to support the international effort to combat drug abuse.

15. That effort had been impeded by a lack of financial resources and the economic crisis affecting many developing countries, particularly those in Africa. The social and economic cost of drug addiction in African countries was growing at an alarming rate. The widespread poverty of rural population groups resulting from the drastic slump in prices for raw materials was one of the basic reasons for the increased production of illicit drug crops.

16. His country had taken measures to suppress drug trafficking by expanding its police force and customs service and lengthening the prison terms for drug-related crimes. With the help of the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control, Côte d'Ivoire had set up a drug analysis laboratory and established an interministerial committee to study the drug abuse problem and propose guidelines for a national policy to combat drug trafficking.

17. Nevertheless, the difficulties encountered demonstrated that the drug problem was linked to the overall question of economic and social development. Interdiction was not enough in order to halt illicit drug production and trafficking. Just remuneration for raw materials and a policy to ensure economic recovery were necessary in order to eradicate the causes of the problem. More than ever, it was necessary to step up international co-operation to achieve that objective.

18. Mr. HITAM (Malaysia) said that the success of the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly had demonstrated the commitment of the world community to increase international co-operation to combat drug abuse. The strategies contained in the Global Programme of Action should be implemented as broadly as possible at the national, regional and international level. His delegation agreed with the views expressed in the report of the Secretary-General on the global programme of action against illicit narcotic drugs (A/45/536) concerning the practical difficulties of monitoring drug control programmes and hoped that delegations would propose new monitoring methods in order to ensure overall effectiveness.

19. Malaysia supported the views of the Secretary-General on enhancing the efficiency of the United Nations structure for drug abuse control, as stated in paragraph 6 of his report in document A/45/652. The proposed unified structure would enable the United Nations to play a central role in the field and should be headed by a senior official at the level of Under-Secretary-General so that he could carry out his tasks more effectively. Malaysia hoped that the Secretary-General would appoint the head of the United Nations drug control programme as soon as possible so that the process of restructuring could begin by 1 January 1991.

(Mr. Hitam, Malaysia)

20. His delegation believed that the Commission on Narcotic Drugs should play a central role in United Nations activities against drug abuse and illlicit trafficking and that the duration of the Commission's regular and special sessions should be increased to enable it to devote more time to a subject of such universal importance. An improvement in the Commission's functioning would greatly contribute to the efficiency of the United Nations drug abuse control structure. The Economic and Social Council should review the situation as a matter of urgency. Consideration might also be given to the possibility of annual instead of biennial meetings.

21. Since Member States had agreed in the Global Programme of Action that higher priority should be given to United Nations activities in drug abuse control, it was crucial that the United Nations Interrational Drug Control Programme should be given the resources it needed to carry out its activity effectively. His delegation sympathized with the appeal by the President of the International Narcotics Control Board for the restoration of budgetary resources previously allocated to the Board to carry out its treaty mandate. His delegation would also favour the allocation of more regular budgetary and extrabudgetary resources across the whole programme so that existing and new mandates could be carried out more efficiently and effectively.

22. He welcomed the appointment of the Group of Experts to advise and assist the Secretary-General on the enhancement of the efficiency of the United Nations structure for drug abuse control and noted its conclusions and recommendations in document A/45/652/Add.1. He was perturbed, however, that some of the recommendations called in effect for the creation of more groups of experts to undertake detailed studies of various issues. While groups of experts might be needed from time to time, it was important for Governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations on their own to provide and exchange information and expertise that they themselves had acquired, so that a bank of important data could be established and co-ordinated by the United Nations without imposing further strain on the Organization through the proliferation of groups of experts and their reports. Available resources should be used to the full to produce optimum results.

23. Malaysia noted with satisfaction that the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances would enter into force on 11 November. Malaysia had been one of the first countries to sign the Convention and hoped to ratify it early in 1991.

24. His delegation supported the various draft resolutions, proposals and recommendations before the Committee. While a great deal had been done during the past year, much more could be done through effective international co-operation and greater commitment by States, with complete trust in the United Nations to play a central role. It was important to remember that, ultimately, it was the way in which individual States implemented their own policy strategies and co-ordinated their action with other countries that would decide the success of their drug control programmes.

25. Mr. NANDOE (Suriname) said that his delegation fully supported the measures already taken by the international community to strengthen international co-operation, since the drug problem transcended national borders and could not be resolved by any country acting alone. In that connection he stressed the importance of the part played by the United Nations, which as early as 1961 had adopted the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, followed by the Protocol of 1972 and the Convention on Psychotropic Substances, 1971. Suriname was a party to those conventions and had signed the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. It was also a party to the International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries, which expressed concern about the link between mercenaries and drug traffickers, and he urged all other States to become parties in order to speed up its entry into force. His country also welcomed and supported the Political Declaration and Global Programme of Action adopted by the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly and called for speedy implementation of the Programme which attached equal importance to the three most significant aspects of the drug problem: demand, supply and trafficking.

26. His delegation welcomed the well-balanced and well thought out report of the Group of Experts, contained in document A/45/652/Add.1, and supported the recommendation for the creation of a single executive unit, directed by a senior official on a full-time basis, to integrate all the activities of the three existing units within the Secretariat. The unit, which should be headed by a high-level and experienced official, should be established as soon as possible.

27. Since Suriname had become a transit port in the international drug trade, the drug problem had become acute. Outdated legislation was now being adapted to combat the problem and a committee had been set up to study the legislation and recommend amendments, as well as to draft new legal provisions.

28. Bilateral agreements on the suppression of illicit drug trafficking and production had been signed with neighbouring countries and with some of them practical steps had been taken for co-operation in law enforcement. Suriname had a special narcotic drug unit within the police force which in recent years, with the assistance of other organizations and the general public, had seized considerable amounts of drugs destined for delivery abroad. In 1986 a national council on drug control had been created to deal with control and prevention of the illicit use of drugs and to supervise the treatment of drug addicts.

29. His Government, noting that the drug transit problem in Suriname had emerged following the downward economic trend, considered that there might be a link between drug transit and economic development problems. Economic assistance and support would therefore greatly help his country in its efforts. Suriname whole-heartedly supported all initiatives to solve the global drug problem and commended the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies on the progress that had already been made.

30. Ms. VARGAS (Nicaragua) said that, despite intensive national and international efforts, the drug problem was not abating. No country, developing or developed, was immune from its effects. The Secretary-General in his opening speech to the

(Ms. Vargas, Nicaragua)

seventeenth special session of the General Assembly had described the problem as a time bomb and had stressed the need for urgent action by the international community as a matter of priority.

31. The drug problem had existed before the creation of the League of Nations. She recalled the different stages of legislation over the years, from the International Opium Convention signed in Geneva in 1925, to the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, of 1988, which Nicaragua had been among the first 20 countries to ratify. That Convention embodied the fundamental notion of shared responsibility and international co-operation, and the principles of sovereign equality, territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of countries.

32. The seventeenth special session of the General Assembly had been convened to decide how the international community and the United Nations could deal effectively with the growing drug menace and had adopted a Political Declaration and a Global Programme of Action and had proclaimed the period from 1991 to 2000 as the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse.

33. At the beginning of the 1990s, the international community now had a set of multilateral instruments admirably suited to promoting co-operation between States, and the various United Nations organs such as the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the International Narcotics Control Board, the Division of Narcotic Drugs, the Secretariat of the Board, and the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control, were working to recommend effective measures and to help Governments in their national efforts.

34. Her delegation appreciated the intensive efforts of the United Nations in combating drug abuse and the arduous work of the Secretariat but regretted that the recommendations of the Group of Experts contained in document A/45/652/Add.1 had not been issued sooner, so that Governments could have more time to study them in detail. Nevertheless, her delegation could support the recommendation that the three existing secretariat units should be amalgamated into a single executive structure, whose chief executive would be a very senior official under the authority of the Secretary-General, as set forth in paragraphs 32 and 33 of document A/45/652/Add.1; and that, as indicated in the annex to document A/45/652, the new structure would be called the United Nations International Drug Control Programme.

35. Nicaragua was convinced that laws alone would not solve the problems of drug abuse. They must be accompanied by social measures to raise standards of living, especially in the developing countries, which were particularly vulnerable to the drug problem because of the impact of the world economic crisis. In Nicaragua, where drug abuse control was a constant preoccupation, a national drug commission had been set up in 1989, one of whose main tasks was to bring national legislation into conformity with the rules of the Vienna Convention of 1988. Young people were being taught about the dangers of drug abuse as part of their formal education.

(Ms. Vargas, Nicaragua)

36. Nicaragua was also involved in joint drug control action with other Central American countries. As an expression of its political will to co-operate in efforts to control drug trafficking, his country had signed the Regional Co-operation Agreement to Eradicate Illegal Drug Trafficking, which had highlighted the importance of regional and international co-operation and the need to adopt legislation relating to elimination of drug trafficking. In addition, Central American drug control authorities had met at Managua in August 1990 for the purpose of establishing mechanisms to monitor compliance with the Regional Co-operation Agreement. That meeting had adopted a declaration calling for the creation of a Central American commission for the eradication of illegal drug trafficking which would, inter alia, undertake a study of the legislation regulating drug traffic in the region. Such a study would lead to the standardization of that legislation, in conformity with the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, and would help define priority areas for future drug control activities.

37. Nicaragua would continue to endorse any action at the international, national and regional level which would help transform Central America into an area free of illicit drug trafficking.

38. Mr. KUNKOBU (Burkina Faso) said that drug abuse and drug trafficking represented a growing threat and required vigorous and resolute action on the part of the international community. While it had been spared until recently, Burkina Faso was now faced with a growing drug problem and was taking action against it. It was a party to the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs and the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances and maintained regular contact with the International Narcotics Control Board at Vienna, providing it with the statistical information required.

39. In order to prevent the use of prescription drugs for illicit purposes, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare was the sole organ authorized to import and distribute drugs. Nevertheless, in recent years, law enforcement agencies had seized relatively large quantities of illicit drugs; specifically, Burkina Faso was increasingly serving as a transit point for cocaine shipments. Other drugs, such as cannabis and various stimulants and sedatives, were imported into the country and consumed by a growing number of the young and the unemployed. Many people were multiple drug abusers.

40. To cope with the situation, the Government had undertaken a number of initiatives to prevent drug abuse, including educational programmes on drug use, national seminars bringing together representatives from customs, law enforcement agencies, environmental protection agencies, and airport and tourism divisions, radio broadcasts and publicity spots in local languages on tobacco, alcohol and drug abuse and articles on drug abuse in national newspapers.

41. The combat against drugs also had to be carried out at the international level. Co-operation and solidarity between developed and developing countries was the only way to provide effective implementation of the Political Declaration and

(Mr. Kunkobu, Burkina Faso)

the Global Programme of Action, adopted by the General Assembly at its seventeenth special session in February 1990.

42. It was equally important to develop co-operation among the countries of the African subregion. Faced with massive economic and social problems, those countries had to work together to prevent any further difficulties which would certainly arise from any increase in illicit drug production on their territories. In that connection, his delegation fully supported the provisions of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

43. Mr. LENNOX-BOYD (United Kingdom) said that there was an increasing awareness that the United Nations was uniquely capable of harnessing international opinion and co-ordinating international action to practical effect. It had clearly done so in combating one of the most alarming social threats, the use of narcotic drugs. The United Nations specialized drug control agencies were doing valuable work. In addition, guidelines for practical action had been hammered out at the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly and the World Ministerial Summit to reduce demand for drugs and to combat the cocaine threat. The United Nations Decade of Action against Drug Abuse offered an opportunity for the international community to adopt effective measures to counter the threat from drugs and provided a timetable for doing so.

44. His delegation welcomed the imminent entry into force of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. Legislative procedures were under way to enable his Government to ratify the Convention early in 1991 and to extend the provisions of the Convention to the dependent Territories.

45. Among the important additional steps that each country had to take were: ratification of United Nations and regional conventions; conclusion of bilateral and multilateral agreements on tracing and confiscating the proceeds of drug trafficking; and prevention of the diversion of precursor chemicals into the illegal manufacturing of drugs.

46. The United Kingdom was implementing a number of important drug control policies and measures. One of its main objectives was to reduce the demand for drugs and, in addition to domestic measures to that end, it was setting up a Demand Reduction Task Force to offer guidance to policy makers in other countries. There was also a need for more effective action in the field of precursor chemicals. While it had long and successfully used a suspicion-based monitoring system, his country realized that such an approach might not be the most appropriate for monitoring the international chemical trade. It therefore fully endorsed the comprehensive study of the issues in that field being carried out by the Chemical Action Task Force, of which it was a member.

47. In its efforts to prevent money laundering, his Government had thus far concluded 18 bilateral arrangements to trace, freeze and confiscate the proceeds of

(Mr. Lennox-Boyd, United Kingdom)

drug trafficking and would shortly sign the Council of Europe convention on that matter. It welcomed the report of the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering, which provided a valuable framework for international action in that sphere. The Intergovernmental Expert Group to Study the Economic and Social Consequences of Illicit Traffic in Drugs had also made a number of sound recommendations with regard to the Task Force and to banking practices and his delegation hoped those recommendations would be endorsed by the General Assembly.

48. The United Kingdom was providing a great deal of financial assistance and training to other countries engaged in the fight against drugs. Moreover, it had increased its contributions to the United Nations activities in that area and hoped other Member States would follow its lead. It believed that drug abuse control should be accorded a higher priority in the United Nations regular budget. It fully supported the recommendation of the Group of Experts regarding the consolidation of the three existing drug control units into one structure. That structure should be directed by a full-time, senior-level official and should have the freedom of action to take the measures necessary for effective drug control. His Government also endorsed the other recommendations of the Group of Experts. Those recommendations must form the basis for immediate reform of the United Nations structure for drug abuse control.

49. Mr. DEKANY (Hungary) said that, having gone beyond the stage of raising awareness of the drug problem, the international community must implement the relevant resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session and at its seventeenth special session. Furthermore, international co-operation could not be effective without universal accession to the relevant conventions and protocols and the provision of increased resources for drug control activities. At the same time, the international community had to take into account the difficulties arising from insufficient resources, conflicting interests and inadequate domestic regulations.

50. A growing number of transit countries, including Hungary, were being transformed into consumer countries. Although its drug problem was not comparable to that of many other European countries, Hungary was witnessing an alarming increase in the abuse of prescription drugs among young people. While available on the black market, hard drugs were beyond the means of most Hungarians. To combat the drug problem, his country had elaborated a special drug programme which attempted to involve the public in prevention activities and also provided for the setting up of local and national drug abuse treatment centres. In addition, his Government had decided to establish an intersectoral task force to deal with drug problems.

51. Hungary was a party to the basic conventions relating to drugs. It had taken an active part in the elaboration of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and was considering ratification. It co-operated actively with international drug control agencies by, inter alia, providing data on the production and consumption of drugs in Hungary. It had, on a provisional basis, restricted the export and import of Schedule I precursor chemicals to a single company.

(Mr. Dekany, Hungary)

52. The link between drug trafficking and organized crime was well known. In that connection, his country was encouraged by the regional efforts to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking. It greatly appreciated the visit to the "Balkan route" countries of a delegation composed of representatives from UNFDAC, Interpol, and the Customs Co-operation Council, which had helped to identify several promising projects. His Government also attached great importance to the work of the Council of Europe Co-operation Group to Combat Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in Drugs (Pompidou Group), whose forthcoming agenda included discussion on the holding of a European East-West meeting on drug abuse in 1991. Having just become a member of the Council of Europe, Hungary was endeavouring to implement the Council's recommendations for action in the field of drug control.

53. The United Nations played a key role in international efforts to combat drug abuse. His delegation therefore attached great importance to such events as the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly and the Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders. Model treaties would serve as important tools in the fight against drug traffickers and international crime.

54. His Government endorsed the recommendation of the Group of Experts regarding the consolidation of the three existing secretariat units into one, headed by a senior official reporting directly to the Secretary-General. The first priority for that new unit should be to assist the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) in monitoring compliance with treaty obligations. While agreeing with the Secretary-General's recommendations with respect to improving the functioning of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, his delegation felt that Commission itself should be entrusted with that task at its forthcoming session. Furthermore, INCB, which played a major role in controlling the legal production, manufacture and trade of drugs, must retain its ability to function in an independent manner.

55. His delegation endorsed the Secretary-General's recommendation concerning the creation of a United Nations International Drug Control Programme. Such a structure would ensure efficient co-ordination of all United Nations drug control activities. Finally, increased resources for UNFDAC assistance activities would substantially enhance the authority of the United Nations in spearheading drug control efforts.

56. Mr. MOLINA ARAMBARRI (Argentina) said that the reduction of international tension had unfortunately not been accompanied by a corresponding decline in the international drug trade, which had instead been increasing at an alarming rate. The drug traffickers, motivated by enormous profits, corrupted the institutions of the countries in which they operated, thereby obtaining licence to undermine the political and institutional stability of those countries.

57. The drug problem was an international one and could be dealt with effectively only through the vigorous action of the entire international community. There was no artificial division between producer, consumer and transit countries in the drug

(Mr. Molina Arambarri, Argentina)

trade. All were victims of that criminal activity and the United Nations was the appropriate forum for organizing international efforts to deal with it. It was encouraging to note that the international community had in fact become increasingly aware of its responsibilities in that area.

58. The Latin American countries had made commendable efforts to combat illegal trafficking, but comparable efforts were required on the part of the consumer countries to reduce the demand. The greatest responsibility lay with the developed countries because they were the major consumers and had the resources needed to end the traffic once and for all. Production must be stopped through crop substitution, but that required co-operation from the industrialized countries to prevent economic dislocation. Substitute crops must be economically viable and marketable. Industrialized countries must provide technical, economic and financial assistance to promote the necessary development in the producer countries and to combat trafficking in the transit countries.

59. In order to make the United Nations structure for drug abuse control more efficient, the existing structures should be merged into a single one headed by a high-level official reporting directly to the Secretary-General. That would increase efficiency, avoid duplication and establish sufficient operational authority to achieve positive results.

60. His country had been active in preparing the Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. It was already a signatory, and would soon accede to and ratify it. The Convention was a good example of the progress made in recent years in efforts to reduce the production and consumption of drugs. He stressed, however, that the causes of drug abuse must also be studied if the problem was to be eliminated completely.

61. Mr. BLACKMAN (Barbados) said that legal institutions had been threatened, economies destabilized and societies pushed to the brink of disaster as a result of the continuing escalation of drug abuse, and he therefore welcomed the development of national and international strategies to deal with it. His delegation was particularly gratified to note that reduction of demand was now considered as important as curtailment of supply. The Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, which would soon enter into force, was especially welcome because it included effective measures to address many drug-related activities, and he therefore hoped that it would become universal. His country, which had recently enacted new and comprehensive legislation to combat drug trafficking, would accede to the Convention.

62. In addition to enacting new legislation to combat drug trafficking his Government had developed a national plan of action that included drug treatment and rehabilitation measures and a comprehensive public education programme to reduce the demand for drugs. However, many small States, such as his own, lacked sufficient resources to wage a war on drugs and required increased bilateral and multilateral assistance. His own country had benefited greatly from bilateral assistance. The United Nations drug control bodies had also done commendable work

(Mr. Blackman, Barbados)

and he therefore urged that efforts be made to remedy the lack of financial and human resources that impaired their ability to discharge their mandates. The new integrated structure recommended by the Group of Experts (A/45/652/Add.1) must also be provided with adequate financial and human resources if it was to be effective as well as efficient.

63. Mr. VILLAGRAN DE LEON (Guatemala) said that the international community had recognized its collective responsibility to combat the production and consumption of drugs and that the United Nations had a central role to play. He therefore welcomed the proposals by the Group of Experts (A/45/652/Add.1) to integrate the activities of the various drug control bodies and units and the Group's recognition of the need for better co-ordination and leadership. Doubts persisted, however, about the new organization, how existing secretariats would be integrated and how it would be financed, and those doubts must be dispelled in the resolution to be adopted. He hoped that United Nations efforts in the area of drug control could still be strengthened despite the financial crisis that had led to unfortunate cuts in programmes of particular importance to developing countries. The wealthier States must make a proportionally greater contribution to United Nations efforts to combat the drug problem and do more to strengthen international co-operation for development.

64. It was unfortunate that the resources available to the international community to fight drugs were so feeble compared with the enormous profits available to the drug trade. Those profits were clearly not being invested in the developing countries that produced the drugs. The developing countries were further disadvantaged in international trade by unprecedently low prices for their exports. The resultant indebtedness meant a reduction of essential social services, the failure of development plans and increasing poverty, thereby giving poor farmers a powerful incentive to produce drug crops. Crop substitution could not succeed unless farmers were assured adequate income and social services. The international community must make more resources available to the producer countries so that a strategy of crop substitution could be made feasible by providing legal market alternatives.

65. The violent crime associated with drugs was threatening the democratic institutions and human rights of a number of countries. The developed countries, whose growing market for drugs was largely responsible for that situation, must study the reasons for increasing drug abuse. The study requested in paragraph 9 of General Assembly resolution 44/142 should also deal with the economic pressures that forced farmers in developing countries to grow drug crops. The connection between the drug trade and the arms trade, and the efforts of armed groups in developing countries to undermine burgeoning democracy, must also be studied.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

THIRD COMMITTEE
33rd meeting
held on
Tuesday, 6 November 1990
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 33rd MEETING

Chairman:	Ms. ZINDOGA (Vice-Chairman)	(Zimbabwe)
later:	Ms. COOMBS (Vice-Chairman)	(New Zealand)

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AGENDA ITEM 108: INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO COMBAT DRUG ABUSE AND ILLICIT TRAFFICKING (continued)

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In the absence of the Chairman, Ms. Zindoga (Zimbabwe), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 108: INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO COMBAT DRUG ABUSE AND ILLICIT TRAFFICKING (continued) (A/45/3, chap. V, sect. D, A/45/301, A/45/303, A/45/329, A/45/495, A/45/535, A/45/536, A/45/542, A/45/652 and Add.1; E/1990/39/Add.1; A/C.3/45/41)

1. Mr. KALITA (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that international co-operation in drug abuse control had greatly increased in recent years, and mentioned the following landmarks: the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, held in 1987, at which the Declaration and Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control had been adopted; the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, adopted in 1988; and the holding, in February 1990, of the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly, at which the Political Declaration and the Global Programme of Action on international co-operation against illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances had been adopted. The international community must now ensure that the provisions contained in those instruments were implemented. The International Narcotics Control Board and the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control must play a more important role in that regard.

2. His delegation welcomed the work of the Group of Experts appointed by the Secretary-General to assist him in enhancing the efficiency of the United Nations structure for drug abuse control. The Secretary-General had based the recommendations contained in document A/45/652 on the Group's work. The proposal for a unified United Nations drug control structure merited attention, without prejudice to the autonomy of the International Narcotics Control Board or to the voluntary nature of contributions to the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control. Similarly, his delegation welcomed the recommendation that the head of the new unit should discharge that function alone and not as part of work in other bodies. His delegation also agreed that the head of the new unit should report directly to the Secretary-General and that the unit should have its headquarters at Vienna, so as to make use of the infrastructure already existing there and avoid unnecessary expenditure.

3. One of the most important measures which could be adopted related to strengthening the legal foundation for the campaign against the monster of drugs. The Ukrainian SSR, which had acceded to the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs and the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances, was discharging the obligations incumbent upon it under those important international instruments. His delegation also attached great weight to the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, which must become an effective instrument in the fight against drug trafficking. His Government had recently participated in the drafting of the Convention, had signed it and was currently concluding the process of ratification. Moreover, the Ukrainian SSR was

(Mr. Kalita, Ukrainian SSR)

incorporating in its national legislation the requisite measures for the implementation of the Convention within its territory, in addition to establishing the administrative structures needed for that purpose.

4. His delegation looked forward with interest to the convening, in 1990, of the regional meeting for Europe of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, which could be a major factor in reducing illicit drug trafficking.

5. It was obvious that the effectiveness of international measures to combat drug abuse was closely linked to that of national measures. The Ukrainian SSR had begun an anti-drug campaign throughout the country, and had helped more than 27,000 drug addicts. In the summer of 1990 it had begun a country-wide programme to combat drug abuse. At the same time, in order to complement the work of the agencies already operating in that sphere it had established an interregional drug abuse control unit. Control of the production, transport and storage of and traffic in drugs had significantly improved. Strict penalties were imposed, including heavy fines and prison terms of up to 15 years.

6. In the light of international experience, it was obvious that the Ukrainian SSR could not resolve the problem by means of sanctions alone. It was also necessary to apply preventive measures to eliminate the conditions which led to drug consumption and to promote the rehabilitation of drug addicts.

7. The United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse, to begin in 1991, would need a good start in order to be a success. In that connection his delegation supported the establishment of a new unified structure entrusted with drug control programmes. In addition, support should be given to implementation of the Global Programme of Action adopted by the General Assembly at its seventeenth special session, which stipulated the measures to be adopted during the Decade. His delegation had requested the Commission on Narcotic Drugs to formulate a programme for the Decade and to devote particular attention to international measures to guarantee attainment of the objectives of the Decade. Further, particular attention must be paid to assessing the implementation of measures under the Decade and to the bilateral and multilateral exchange of information. In that connection his Government offered to host a seminar on the problems of controlling drug abuse, with participation by the United Nations and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. His Government, which attached great importance to national measures, hoped that, in connection with the Decade, it would soon prove possible to establish national committees in order to mobilize public opinion in Member States.

8. Mr. AWOONOR (Ghana) said that national, regional and international efforts to combat the menace of drugs and their devastating effects on socio-economic and cultural development had not so far yielded the desired results. Given the multifaceted nature of the problem, it could be eliminated only through a comprehensive, long-term programme for which the international community as a whole assumed responsibility. His delegation thus welcomed the general consensus in that regard that had emerged over the years.

(Mr. Awoonor, Ghana)

9. The important accomplishments of the United Nations in drug control - for example, the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, amended by the 1972 Protocol, and the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances - were commendable. The lack of appreciable success in the war against drugs had led to the need for further programmes to strengthen international co-operation. In that connection he mentioned the adoption by 138 States, at the 1987 International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, of the Declaration and Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline, which were still valid today.

10. Ghana welcomed the entry into force on 11 November 1990 of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, adopted at Vienna in December 1988. The provisions of the Convention represented a far-reaching effort by the international community to attack the root of the drug problem. Ghana, which had ratified the Convention, urged all States that had not yet done so to ratify it as soon as possible. His country had enacted several laws to implement the Convention. In May 1990, it had promulgated the narcotic drug law, designed to reduce the incidence of drug offences and provide deterrent punishment for drug-related crimes. The law provided for the seizure and forfeiture of equipment used to commit such offences and the confiscation of income and property acquired through illicit drug trafficking. The law also provided for international co-operation and mutual assistance to States parties to the Convention.

11. Ghana attached great importance to the Political Declaration and Global Programme of Action adopted at the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly.

12. His delegation commended the Group of Experts appointed by the Secretary-General to enhance the efficiency of the United Nations structure for drug abuse control and welcomed the Group's recommendation that the three existing drug-related bodies operating in Vienna should be unified into a single executive structure under one head. Its work would greatly improve the performance of the United Nations in the field of drug control and eliminate some of the problems relating to duplication of duties by the three existing bodies. He hoped that the new structure would be provided with the necessary funds to carry out its mandate.

13. Suppressing the demand for drugs was essential to the success of any international effort aimed at eradicating illicit drugs. The major drug consumer countries should tackle the problem vigorously within their own borders; otherwise the efforts to combat drugs by transit countries and even producer countries would not be successful. It was not enough to give moral lessons to producer countries when there did not seem to be any comprehensive programme to eliminate drug consumption in the industrialized countries. It was time for the consumer countries to set aside rhetoric and carry out a serious and radical programme of action since the producer countries were poor, needed resources for development and could not afford the costly expenditures which national drug control programmes entailed.

(Mr. Awoonor, Ghana)

14. Since the major consumer countries were also the main sources of chemical precursors used in the manufacture of illicit drugs, programmes aimed at suppressing demand should include the establishment of an effective monitoring mechanism that could prevent the export of chemical products for use by drug producers. The producers of precursor chemicals could, with a little more effort, ensure that their exports were not used for the illicit production of drugs. Ghana welcomed the initiative taken by the International Narcotics Control Board to set up a unit to monitor implementation of article 12 of the 1988 Convention concerning the control of substances frequently used in the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

15. A realistic international programme to suppress supply sources should combine anti-drug efforts with a fair global economic system aimed at providing an equitable world market for the legitimate products of the developing countries. It was necessary to consider the fate of hundreds of thousands of rural farmers who depended on the crops for their livelihood instead of simply proclaiming the destruction of coca or marijuana fields as the objective, without any effort to replace those crops with a new production system. The efforts to establish viable crop-substitution programmes should be complemented not only by creating the necessary markets for the crops to be produced, but also by guaranteeing fair prices for them.

16. West African ports were increasingly being used for the transit of drugs. In addition to seizing drugs arriving in its ports, Ghana was making every effort to improve its methods of detecting drug traffickers sought in other regions. Nevertheless, it was necessary to establish a comprehensive regional and international drug control mechanism that would ensure that gains in one region did not negatively affect other regions. Strict implementation the principles of the 1988 Convention would be useful in that regard.

17. Traffickers who were successfully detected in some regions had chosen other developing regions because there was a lack of sophisticated equipment for effective detection and control of their activities in those regions. Such countries would welcome regional and bilateral co-operation. The fragile economies of the countries through which illicit drugs passed needed the appropriate equipment for detecting traffickers who used their ports. It was also necessary to train customs and law enforcement officials and provide appropriate laboratory facilities. Ghana welcomed the efforts of the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control in those areas.

18. Mr. MONTALVO (Ecuador) underscored his country's complete and absolute faith in the fundamental principles of international co-operation and solidarity, which were the only possible response by the world community to the unusual increase in all forms of drug trafficking and the international spread of that evil, which was unprecedented in history. No society in the world was sheltered from the drug problem. Nevertheless, although that problem had grown in Ecuador in recent years, drug trafficking had always been marginal in that country. In Ecuador, marijuana was not produced, cocaine was not refined and barely 1 per cent of the total amount

(Mr. Montalvo, Ecuador)

of coca from the Andean region was produced there. Ecuador's peasant farmers were not accustomed to the consumption of coca and its economy did not depend on the cultivation of that plant.

19. The impact of money from the drug trade was not significant in Ecuador, where cases of corruption in the bodies that combated drug trafficking and administered justice had occurred only as exceptions and where the violence caused by large drug trafficking mafias did not exist.

20. For that reason, observers from all nations considered Ecuador an island of peace in a region beset with violence. Nevertheless, since that community was based on more than geography, Ecuador supported the other Andean countries in their efforts to combat drug trafficking. Because of that feeling of unconditional solidarity, Ecuador was participating in the "Initiative of the Americas for the Andean Countries".

21. His country knew that the only possibility was a concerted response based on joint efforts and policies. Accordingly, it had co-operated very closely with neighbouring countries, using regional legal mechanisms, exchanging information and participating in the reciprocal monitoring of the movement of property, capital and persons. Ecuador had defended the principle of "shared responsibility", which, on the basis of a comprehensive approach, took into account the social, economic and cultural causes of the drug problem. Ecuador had also strongly stressed the need for absolute respect for the sovereignty and integrity of States in combatting drug trafficking.

22. Drug trafficking was a clear violation of human rights and an offence against peace, democratic life and relations between peoples. For that reason, Ecuador had ratified the 1988 Convention on 23 March 1990 and in June 1990 had hosted an inter-American meeting on "Education to Combat Drug Abuse".

23. Pursuant to the relevant General Assembly resolutions and in particular to the Political Declaration and Global Programme of Action, Ecuador had established a national council for the control of narcotic substances and a number of "integrated service controls". It had also promulgated a national plan for the integral prevention of drug production, traffic and consumption and a law on narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, which was a real innovation in Ecuadorian legislation and introduced original juridical devices for the persecution, prevention, categorization and penalization of crimes related to drug trafficking.

24. Co-operation and shared responsibility was also required at international level to cope with the drug problem, which, because of its structural ramifications, required that special attention should be paid to socio-economic injustice. In the case of the Andean region, it was essential to tackle the problem through a viable system of crop substitution, the application of guarantees to the marketing of commodities, investment substitution and attempts to solve the external debt problem.

(Mr. Montalvo, Ecuador)

25. In conclusion of his statement, the representative referred to the reports contained in documents A/45/535 and A/45/652 and Add.1, expressing, in particular, support for two of the suggestions contained in the latter document - one calling for the integration of all United Nations activities related to drug-abuse control under the direction of a high-level official, together with the appointment of an advisory group, and the second referring to the urgent need for all United Nations functions to be carried out more effectively and realistically.

26. Mr. ARCILLA (Philippines) said the magnitude of drug abuse and illicit trafficking was such that the problem must be dealt with at all times and at all levels since no one country or international organization could cope with it satisfactorily on its own in view of the transnational groupings and consortia which were engaged in illicit drug trafficking.

27. In spite of the meagre resources of the Philippines, its Government was fighting the scourge of drugs on the basis of a multi-pronged strategy encompassing law enforcement; preventive education, training and information and the treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts and had recently adopted a programme of action for the prevention and control of drug abuse. It had also conducted nation-wide operations leading to the arrest of traffickers and the eradication of marijuana crops, primarily in rural areas, where drug traffickers took advantage of the poverty of the populace. At the international level, joint operations were being conducted, and intelligence information was being exchanged with drug authorities in other countries, and specifically with other members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Australia and the United States of America.

28. The relative ease with which drugs were smuggled across the country's coastlines, due to its geographical location, accounted for its Government's involvement in co-operative activities on a bilateral and multilateral basis. It was for that reason that the Philippine delegation welcomed the entry into force of the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, to which it was a signatory. The Philippines intended to ratify the Convention and had incorporated its provisions concerning sanctions for offences related to drug trafficking into its national legislation. With regard to the role of the United Nations as the focal point of international efforts to eradicate drug abuse and illicit trafficking, he mentioned the Political Declaration enunciated during the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking held at Vienna in 1987, the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly and the World Ministerial Summit to Reduce the Demand for Drugs and to Combat the Cocaine Threat, held in London in April 1990. However, one critical area in which efforts by the United Nations were not so visible was that of co-ordination in enhancing the efficiency of the United Nations structure for drug abuse control. Significant progress had been achieved as a result of the transfer of functions to a single unit, and the Philippines noted with keen interest the modified format of the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/45/542, which was structured around the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control and the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control.

(Mr. Arcilla, Philippines)

29. The report of the Group of Experts contained in document A/45/652/Add.1, was also commendable, and the Philippines agreed in principle with its recommendation; however, in view of the managerial and financial implications of the restructuring exercise, the Philippine delegation was prepared to exchange views with other delegations on the best way of implementing the new unified structure. It noted some divergence between the report of the experts and that of the Secretary-General (A/45/652) but expected that it would be quickly resolved in the light of the universal support of the comprehensive approach and co-ordinated structure. His delegation also noted with interest the preliminary report contained in document A/45/535 on the economic and social consequences of illicit traffic in drugs, which regrettably did not comprise an in-depth study owing to the limited time and empirical data available. There was need for such a study to deal with the quantification of economic transactions, such as money laundering, confiscation and the activities of organized crime, and their impact on national economies.

30. Mr. WISNUMURTI (Indonesia) noted that the international community had reached a consensus in favour of the adoption of balanced co-operative measures at all levels to address the problem of the supply of and demand for illicit drugs and that that consensus had become clear at the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking held at Vienna in 1987. One of the results of that conference had been the adoption of the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control, which provided an overall framework for action and was later re-enforced by other instruments, including the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. The delegation of Indonesia noted that in his report contained in document A/45/495, the Secretary-General reported the entry into force of that convention, it having been ratified by the requisite number of States. Indonesia had signed the Convention, had established a national committee with a view to its ratification and had begun to apply it provisionally within the parameters of its national legal principles.

31. Another important event which had occurred in 1990 in connection with the drive against illicit trafficking in narcotics and drug abuse was the convening of the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly, at which an important declaration had been adopted, recognition had been given to the linkage between illicit drugs and socio-economic and cultural conditions and a global programme of action had also been adopted. His delegation welcomed the measures taken to implement the plan derived from that programme, which was described in document A/45/536. The World Ministerial Summit to Reduce the Demand for Drugs and to Combat the Cocaine Threat, held in London in April 1990, also constituted an important contribution to future action and global strategy in that connection.

32. After reviewing the steps which had led up to the establishment of the Group of Experts selected to advise and assist the Secretary-General in order to enhance the efficiency of the United Nations structure for drug abuse control, he said that the report of the Group (A/45/652/Add.1) presented clear choices concerning the structure required to fulfil the mandates of the various United Nations bodies concerned. He also noted the changes being made by the Secretary-General on the

(Mr. Wisnumurti, Indonesia)

basis of the conclusions reached by the Group of Experts, some of which would become effective at the beginning of the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse proclaimed at the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly. His delegation also acknowleged the efforts made by the Co-ordinator of all United Nations activities related to drug control, who had achieved considerable progress since that post had been transferred to the United Nations Office at Vienna, and recognized the contribution made by the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control in avoiding duplication and rationalizing the use of the resources of the United Nations. It looked forward to the annual update of that action plan.

33. Mr. RICHEV (Bulgaria) said that during the past year the international community had overcome political, ideological and other obstacles and made remarkable progress in the fight against drug abuse and illicit trafficking. The Political Declaration and Global Programme of Action adopted at the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly, with its balanced methodology and its combination of economic, social, legal and prevention proposals, constituted an ideal basis for all Member States to adopt measures for the eradication of the drug scourge. Also noteworthy were the results of the World Ministerial Summit to Reduce the Demand for Drugs and to Combat the Cocaine Threat, held at the initiative of the United Kingdom.

34. His delegation attached particular importance to the early entry into force of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988 and the compliance of national legislation with its norms. That first phase of the establishment of a legal framework for international co-operation world wide would be followed by a series of co-operation agreements at the regional and bilateral levels. The delegation of Bulgaria supported the recommendation in the report of the Group of Experts to advise and assist the Secretary-General on the enhancement of the efficiency of the United Nations structure for drug abuse control that a United Nations centre should be set up to co-ordinate the work of all United Nations bodies in that field, but that the autonomy of the secretariat of the International Narcotics Control Board should be guaranteed.

35. Despite the economic and political difficulties which it was encountering in its transition to a market economy, Bulgaria was prepared to co-operate more closely with all the States concerned to put an end to the intensive illicit drug traffic along the so-called Balkan route. In the past 12 months, and at the initiative and with the assistance of the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC), specific measures had been adopted to increase vigilance along that route. Furthermore, at the meetings of law enforcement officials held at Rome and Sofia, measures had been adopted to broaden co-operation between the countries of that region and those of Western Europe.

36. Ms. LISSIDINI (Uruguay) said that in recent years significant legal gains had been made in the international fight against drug abuse and illicit trafficking, namely the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug

(Ms. Lissidini, Uruguay)

Abuse Control, adopted in 1987; the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, adopted in 1988; and the Political Declaration and Global Programme of Action adopted at the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly, in February 1990. In addition to those instruments, in future the proposal that a United Nations programme should be set up in that area, made by the Group of Experts to advise and assist the Secretary-General, had Uruguay's support. The illicit consumption and trafficking of drugs had been increasing and consequently, international co-operation was necessary, in accordance with the principle of shared responsibility. Since acceptance of that principle, it had been possible to go beyond the polemics between consumer and producer countries, reduce illicit cultivation by substituting profitable crops and reduce the demand for drugs.

37. Drug abuse and illicit trafficking in drugs had disastrous consequences for society, the family and the individual. They wrecked the economy of countries, which were then forced to divert resources to the prevention, treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts and the suppression and punishment of related crimes. Consequently, her delegation felt that the recommendations of the Intergovernmental Expert Group to Study the Economic and Social Consequences of Illicit Traffic in Drugs were very useful, in particular the recommendation that surveys should be carried out to determine the social and economic effects of drug trafficking in various regions of the world.

38. In Uruguay, while there was no illegal drug production, there was drug abuse and illicit trafficking and a national plan had been established to tackle the problem. An inter-ministerial agency had been set up to formulate policies, draft reports and studies, promote international, regional and subregional co-operation and adopt measures in areas such as security, preventive education, assistance and rehabilitation. In addition, despite acceptance of banking secrecy, current legislation allowed the courts in certain circumstances to request information from the banks to combat the laundering of money obtained through illicit drug trafficking.

39. Mr. INDERJIT (India) said that, during the year that had elapsed since the previous session of the General Assembly, the United Nations system had made considerable progress in the battle against drug abuse and illicit trafficking, thanks to the convening of the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly and the completion of all the studies requested at that session: the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control, the report of the Intergovernmental Expert Group to Study the Economic and Social Consequences of Illicit Traffic in Drugs and the report of the Group of Experts to advise and assist the Secretary-General on the enhancement of the efficiency of the United Nations structure for drug abuse control, all of which recognized that not only the supply of, but also the demand for, illicit drugs must be halted.

40. Even though the drug problem crossed national boundaries, affecting producer countries, transit countries, like India, and consumer countries, the fight against drug abuse was being waged primarily at the national level. Accordingly, the

(Mr. Inderjit, India)

countries which were fighting to exterminate the drug scourge should receive every assistance.

41. India produced legal drugs, in particular from the opium poppy, primarily for medical purposes and strictly monitored them in terms of their distribution and sale. Its record in that area had been commended by various international agencies including the International Narcotics Control Board, which had reported that the system of control set up under the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs was still operating satisfactorily. Even so, measures had been adopted to reduce the area under opium poppy cultivation, with the attendant negative social and economic consequences.

42. His delegation was surprised and disappointed by the proposal for the insertion in the Plan of a new paragraph after paragraph 42, to the effect that the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control should pay special attention to the formulation and execution of programmes to reduce the availability of drugs and psychotropic substances subjected to international control and intended for legal medical purposes, because that proposal contradicted a report on the supply of and demand for opiates for medical purposes drafted by the International Narcotics Control Board, which stated that the legitimate need for opiates was not being fully met, particularly in developing countries. At issue was a regrettable lack of co-ordination between the different agencies of the United Nations system.

43. Even though the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control (E/1990/39) had established a balance between the need to solve the problems and the need to protect legitimate interests, the attitude adopted in document E/1990/39/Add.1 towards the producers of legal opiates was quite unsatisfactory. Even more serious was the fact that the document made absolutely no mention of the problems of the transit States. His delegation therefore hoped that the Secretariat would take note of those concerns and reflect them in the next revised version of the Action Plan. His Government welcomed the forthcoming entry into force of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances which had received the 20 ratifications required, including that of India.

44. Mr. SOTO (Cuba) said that he wished to reiterate Cuba's firm political resolve to do everything possible to eliminate the illicit production, traffic and use of drugs and psychotropic substances. Although drugs did not constitute a social problem in Cuba, because of the geographical location of the country, situated as it was between the production centres of South America and the largest consumer in the world, traffickers were encouraged to violate its territorial waters and air space and some drug cargo had reached its coasts. Those acts, however, did not go unpunished. Between 1985 and 1989, Cuba had confiscated and destroyed 128 tons of various kinds of drugs, all intended for the United States. According to information from INTERPOL, in 1989 Cuba had ranked tenth among the countries confiscating cocaine. In the past 20 years, Cuba had seized 73 vessels and 30 aircraft, 84 of which had been of United States registration; it had also detained 422 drug traffickers, 200 of whom were Americans or Cubans residing in the United States.

(Mr. Soto, Cuba)

45. Cuba had been one of the first countries to accede to the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988 and was a party to the other international instruments in that area. It was reviewing its laws to establish more severe penalties for drug offences, although it had always vigorously enforced existing legislation, and had signed bilateral agreements with several countries in the past year. The absolute masters of the largest consumer market in the world had rejected, without giving any reasons, Cuba's repeated proposals to establish co-operation in that area.

46. Cuba had suffered the scourge of illicit drug trafficking and drug abuse. Some had called it the "paradise of the Caribbean", but that was a very strange idea of paradise, more like Sodom and Gomorrah. In the midst of hunger and poverty, the foreign mafia had thrived in collusion with the corrupt rulers of the time. In January 1959, the triumph of the revolution and the flight of the dictators, venal and corrupt politicians, war criminals and torturers who had protected criminals of every kind had made it possible to suppress the drug mafias, prostitution and gambling. The country had experienced profound changes, which had put an end to hunger and unemployment, illiteracy and backwardness, deprivation and lack of medical care, making way for a society where citizens were able to live in dignity and enjoy true freedom.

47. His delegation associated itself with those speakers who had favoured the establishment of a unified United Nations structure to deal with problems relating to narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. Such a unit would have to play a major role in action to combat drug trafficking and abuse and its success would clearly depend on the political will of States.

48. He welcomed some major advances in activities to combat the problem of the production of, traffic in and illicit demand for narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, and pointed out that a political solution, while necessary, was not enough in and of itself. In Latin America, the enormous costs of that huge effort were burdening countries' impoverished and suffocating economies. Their sacrifice was not being matched by results. When the war on drugs was used, or allowed to be used, to stir up racial and ethnic prejudice, xenophobia and hatred between peoples and minorities, the problem was not resolved but exacerbated.

49. Furthermore, to assume that peasants or poor people in Latin America became involved in drug production and trafficking because people were intrinsically evil was a total aberration. The countries of the so-called third world had always insisted on the crucial importance of substituting fruit, vegetable and coffee crops for coca, marijuana and opiates. Along with raising rural living standards, such crop substitution was essential. There was now some talk of formulas for reducing the heavy external debt burden on countries where anti-drug efforts were of vital importance to mankind. Regrettably, such an approach had yet to be generally accepted and did not enjoy all necessary support.

(Mr. Soto, Cuba)

50. The international community must realize that the seriousness of the problem of the production of, traffic in and illicit demand for narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances was parallelled by worsening living standards in underdeveloped and backward countries, increasingly gaping inequalities between rich and poor countries, trade imbalances, external debt and the perpetual, growing and endemic economic crisis in the so-called third world. There could be no partial solutions; a global solution must be found to the problem of the poverty, backwardness and underdevelopment afflicting many of the world's peoples, and effective action must be taken in the developed countries, which were the major drug consumers, to put an end to the growing demand for drugs.

Ms. Coombs (New Zealand) took the Chair.

51. Ms. ROMULUS (Haiti) said that the drug problem was as old as the world. No country, industrialized or underdeveloped, was safe from that scourge, which did not discriminate between social classes, occupations or educational levels. War was being declared on it everywhere, yet despite some real progress, the total elimination of illicit trafficking so far seemed a dream. Its ramifications were so far-reaching and complex that there was reason to wonder whether international trade, terrorism and economic development might not be dependent on the financial capacities of drug traffickers.

52. Haiti was aware of the serious danger which drugs represented and had resolutely supported all initiatives designed to combat that scourge. Despite its financial difficulties, it was contributing to global efforts to eradicate drugs. Its geographical location in the Caribbean basin made it extremely vulnerable. There had been an extraordinary exchange of information between Haiti, the United States and the Dominican Republic. Haiti supported the initiatives of the CARICOM countries and wished to strengthen its ties with them with a view to waging a massive regional campaign.

53. Her delegation believed that to solve the drug problem, increased public funding would have to be allocated for anti-drug projects. The specialized agencies of the United Nations system should attach more importance to the needs of developing countries, particularly to the training of experts and the establishment and strengthening of administrative and legal structures for combating drugs. The United Nations should play a greater role in the co-ordination of efforts to ensure the cohesion of the structures established.

54. Mr. CHOWDHURY (Bangladesh) said that a problem of such universal dimensions as drug abuse required a co-ordinated and innovative international response. With the phenomenal increase in illicit production, trafficking and abuse of drugs, international co-operation to combat that scourge must be strengthened. Important international meetings had been held, such as the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly at which a Political Declaration and a Global Programme of Action had been adopted. Under United Nations auspices, important legal instruments had been drawn up in that field, the most significant being the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic

(Mr. Chowdhury, Bangladesh)

Substances, adopted in 1988, whose provisions on money-laundering, monitoring of international trade in the so-called precursor chemicals used in illicit drug production, and asset seizure and forfeiture were of special significance. His delegation believed that the Convention was a powerful tool for international co-operation to combat drugs. It urged all States to ratify or accede to the Convention as soon as possible.

55. Bangladesh considered the system-wide action plan, as approved by the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and the Economic and Social Council, crucial to the full implementation of all existing drug abuse control mandates. The plan would allow Member States to evaluate the progress made by the United Nations system in fulfilling its mandates under the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline and the Global Programme of Action.

56. His delegation had considered in detail the report of the Secretary-General on enhancement of the efficiency of the United Nations structure for drug abuse control (A/45/652). Regarding the expert recommendations, Bangladesh agreed that responsibility for (a) treaty implementation, (b) policy implementation and research and (c) operational activities should be undertaken by the proposed United Nations International Drug Control Programme. His delegation hoped that the new organizational unit would give priority to occupational activities, which were of crucial importance for developing countries. The experts' recommendations were balanced and pragmatic and his delegation shared their view that the functioning of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs needed to be improved. It might be appropriate to request the Economic and Social Council to undertake an urgent review of the Commission's work.

57. While Bangladesh did not produce drugs or psychotropic substances, in recent years drug abuse had taken on alarming proportions. His country was being used for transit traffic in drugs. The Government had launched a vigorous campaign to combat the drug menace on two fronts: (a) reduction of the supply of illicit drugs through strong enforcement measures, and (b) demand reduction through, inter alia, preventive educational programmes, plans to enhance the overall development of young people, job creation and the provision of recreational facilities. The mass media were informing and educating the population and maintaining constant vigilance, and those activities had been supplemented by seminars and symposia throughout the country.

58. His Government had set up a Department of Narcotics Control, and a Narcotics Control Board chaired by the First Lady of Bangladesh. In 1988, Parliament had adopted a new law which prohibited the cultivation, production, processing, sale and consumption and trafficking of all narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. The law provided for seizure and confiscation of the assets of convicted traffickers. The Government had also taken measures for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts. However, international efforts must be further intensified to face the challenge.

59. Mr. MATELA (Poland) said that in the past decade, drug abuse and illicit trafficking in narcotics had become a global problem of alarming proportions. The social effects of the problem and the role of transnational criminal organizations called for an appropriate international response.

60. The international community had responded to the challenge at the eleventh special session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and at the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly, which had adopted a Political Declaration and a Global Programme of Action. Those instruments would be the principal directives for international efforts during the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse. The activities of deliberative bodies had been supplemented by the continuous work of international administrative units, in particular, the International Narcotics Control Board which was now being given responsibility for the control of precursors and essential chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of narcotics. The Board was to be commended for having organized a seminar in June on practical means of implementing the necessary measures related to that type of control.

61. The Intergovernmental Expert Group to Study the Economic and Social Consequences of Illicit Trafficking in Drugs had produced a set of important recommendations on ways of preventing the use of legitimate banking and financial services for illicit transactions related to drug trafficking. The implementation of those recommendations would support the efforts of the international community to combat drug trafficking. The best solution among the various proposals made by the Group of Experts to advise and assist the Secretary-General on the enhancement of the efficiency of the United Nations structure for drug abuse control was the creation of a unified structure for drug abuse control, located at Vienna and financed from budgetary and extrabudgetary resources.

62. Poland, as a member of the Commission on narcotic drugs, had offered the expertise of its specialists as advisers. It had taken preventive measures aimed at reducing demand by addicts and was carrying out activities to curb illicit supply. Drug abuse prevention activities were carried out mainly by educational institutions, religious institutions - primarily the Catholic Church - and specialized voluntary institutions. Those activities had helped to curb the growth in the number of drug addicts in Poland.

63. The main drug used by Polish addicts was a home-made brew derived from poppy straw. Measures introduced since 1985 to restrict poppy cultivation had considerably reduced unauthorized access to poppy straw by opiate addicts, who were estimated to number between 10,000 and 20,000 in Poland - a disturbing, although not dangerous, figure in a population of over 38 million. Unfortunately, the drug was administered intravenously. As a result, HIV infection had spread rapidly in 1989 among addicts, who had become the principal group infected by the HIV virus in Poland.

64. The opiates produced domestically in Poland were used solely within the country. Poland was not a source of narcotic substances for other countries. The illicit production of amphetamines for traffickers was a greater problem abroad in terms of its international ramifications. Customs authorities were co-operating

(Mr. Matela, Poland)

with the police in vigorous attempts to interdict such traffic. To support those efforts, the precursor for illicit amphetamine synthesis had been placed on the list of psychotropic substances, putting greater obstacles in the way of illicit procurement from abroad.

65. Poland had signed the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances in March 1989 and had taken various steps to implement it. Those steps included the extension of control over the chemical already mentioned, which was included in Schedule I of the Convention. Various governmental departments were currently studying the implications of the Convention for existing civil and criminal law, with a view to Poland's ratification of the Convention.

66. The fight against drug abuse and illicit trafficking was an obligation for all Governments. Poland was participating in that fight to the extent permitted by its limited resources and its serious financial difficulties, and looked forward to the success of concerted action by all countries.

Ms. Zindoga (Zimbabwe), Vice-Chairman, resumed the Chair.

67. Ms. FRANKEL (Israel) said that the complex problem of drugs could not be solved overnight and required the co-operation of all countries. However, primary responsibility lay with individual States. Drug abuse and crime went hand in hand. In many cases, drug users resorted to criminal activity to obtain the drugs they needed. Trafficking in narcotics was in itself a criminal activity and often culminated in violence. Many crimes were committed under the influence of drugs.

68. A strategy for prevention was fundamental to long-term success in conquering drug abuse and drug-related crime. Educational programmes played a critical role in that respect by increasing the user's awareness of the dangers of drug addiction. They also helped to explain to parents and educators the nature of the problem and how best to combat it.

69. Israel was a party to the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs and its amendments and had taken the necessary steps to implement it. It had also taken decisive steps since the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, held in June 1987, to increase the effect of its national policy in controlling drug abuse and illicit trafficking. Israel had signed the Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances in December 1988. Since then, it had taken a number of steps aimed at bringing its domestic legislation into line with the Convention.

70. In June 1988, the Knesset had created the Anti-Drug Authority mandated to develop a comprehensive nation-wide strategy against drug abuse and co-ordinate the efforts of all governmental and non-governmental agencies. The Authority was empowered to set policy, propose legislation, initiate research, raise funds and design and implement programmes to diminish or prevent drug abuse in Israel. There was no doubt that great strides had been made in drug control through the

(Ms. Frankel, Israel)

Authority's efforts, but much remained to be done, in particular to curb the yearly growth in demand for drugs. As part of its commitment to international co-operation, the Authority was gaining insight into the policies of other countries and was encouraging the Knesset to ratify the 1988 Convention.

71. As with many countries, the supply of illicit drugs in Israel originated in neighbouring countries. There was no production of illegal drugs in Israel itself. Historically, Israel had been a crossroads for trade between countries to its north and to its south. Its northern neighbour was widely acknowledged to be a country in which large areas were exploited for the production of hashish and heroin. Israel called on all its neighbours to co-operate in drug control, despite the political constraints in the region, and was eager to participate in programmes to reduce demand and supply. It was only by co-ordinating the efforts of all countries that the conditions essential to the eradication of the global scourge of drugs could be created. She urged countries to set aside their political differences and to mobilize together, regardless of political or other extraneous considerations, in the fight against drugs.

72. Mr. AL-BADI (Oman) said that his delegation had studied carefully the documents relating to agenda item 108, especially the reports of the Secretary-General and of the Group of Experts appointed to advise and assist him in order to enhance the efficiency of the United Nations structure for drug abuse control. He commended the efforts to improve the work of the United Nations in combating drug abuse. The problem was of concern to the Organization because of its negative impact on the economic and social situation of peoples throughout the world, especially of young people, and because of the threat it posed to the development strategies of all countries as well as to international peace and security. The international community had indicated its determination to combat drug abuse in the Political Declaration adopted during the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly.

73. Oman had participated actively in international and regional efforts to eradicate drug abuse, particularly illicit drug trafficking, and its policy was consistent with international drug abuse control policies. The legislation of Oman provided for serious penalties against drug traffickers. Oman was a party to the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, and planned to accede to the 1988 Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. The Sultanate had established special units to control drug abuse, as well as coast guard units to prevent the illegal entry of drugs into the country. A national plan to strengthen those units was being implemented, and a data base on drug control matters would soon be set up as part of the policy aimed at halting the spread of drugs. Those efforts were being carried out both at the national level and at the regional and Arab State-wide level. In the context of that co-operation, information was provided at the regional and international levels; at the same time, the advances of modern science and the experiences of other countries in the area of drug abuse control were being applied. Oman was prepared to do its utmost to improve international co-operation in drug control within the framework of the United Nations and the competent specialized agencies.

74. Mrs. SEMAFUMU (Uganda) reviewed the history of drug abuse and illicit trafficking control in the framework of the United Nations. Those activities had begun in 1946, with the establishment of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. Nevertheless, the last decade had witnessed an alarming escalation of the drug problem, as well as an extraordinary increase in the monetary value of drug trafficking, which was now second only to the arms trade. The damage caused by the drug problem had cut across the board, transcending national boundaries and making it imperative that decisive action be taken at all levels. Her delegation commended the international community for its decision to take concerted action. That was evident in the adoption by consensus of the 1988 Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, which would enter into force during the current month and which provided inter alia for the extradition of drug traffickers.

75. Another example was the adoption by the General Assembly of the Political Declaration and the Global Programme of Action on International Co-operation against Illicit Production, Supply, Demand, Trafficking and Distribution of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. It was also worth mentioning the reports of the Secretary-General (A/45/542 and A/45/652 and Add.1) on the efforts being made within the United Nations system to address the drug problem from a number of different angles. The consolidation of the functions of the Division of Narcotic Drugs, the International Narcotics Control Board and the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control into a unified programme would certainly go a long way towards strengthening the role of the United Nations in the field of narcotic drugs. Nevertheless, her delegation was of the view that the establishment of the new programme should take into account United Nations administrative and budgetary rules and procedures in order to ensure effective system-wide co-operation.

76. Her delegation welcomed the recognition that the reduction and suppression of demand was a major factor in reducing the dimensions of the drug problem in general and, in particular, the inclusion in the Global Programme of Action of comprehensive strategies and measures for the prevention and reduction of illicit demand, as well as the treatment, rehabilitation and social reintegration of drug addicts.

77. She also noted that at the special session of the General Assembly on the question, the Secretary-General had recommended enhanced co-operation for development, measures for debt relief, guaranteed markets and reasonable prices for legal export commodities. The extremely profitable alternative offered by drug-related activities could be an overwhelming temptation for poor peasants as well as for economically troubled Governments, under pressure to continue servicing their debts, and for underpaid Government officials, who were easy targets for bribery and corruption. Moreover, transit countries, like Uganda, were often too preoccupied with economic problems and too strapped for human and financial resources to detect or combat illicit drug trafficking.

78. Although Uganda was just a transit State, it had long been committed to the fight against drug abuse and illicit trafficking. In 1970, the Government had passed the Pharmaceuticals and Drugs Act against drug trafficking and abuse. In

(Mrs. Semafumu, Uganda)

September 1986, an anti-narcotics drug unit had been established under INTERPOL in the Criminal Investigation Division. A number of arrests and prosecutions of drug traffickers had been made as a result of the activities of that section. In 1989, the National Narcotics Control Committee had been created under the Ministry of Internal Affairs; in June 1990, Uganda had acceded to the 1988 Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

79. Her delegation appealed to Member States to pay up their contributions and provide technical support to enable the African Institute for Crime Prevention and the Treatment of Offenders, established in Kampala in October 1989, to effectively take off and positively contribute to the ongoing world-wide fight against drugs. Her delegation commended the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control and the International Fund for Agricultural Development, for the rural anti-poverty programmes they had undertaken in a number of Latin American and Asian countries. The international community must strengthen the campaign to bring about a drastic and rapid reduction in illicit demand for drugs in order to have an impact on the huge profits that currently made illicit drug trafficking a serious threat.

80. Mr. VAN LIEROP (Vanuatu), speaking on behalf of Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and the Solomon Islands, said that the South Pacific, like other regions of the world, was not immune to the problems of drug abuse and drug trafficking. Those phenomena persisted despite the profound moral indignation they inspired and the huge sums that had been spent in the search for solutions. It was ironic that as the twentieth century came to an end and mankind appeared to be on the verge of resolving some of the recent threats to its survival, it was now confronted by a new challenge to civilization, posed by those who were obsessed by drugs or by the immoral profits gained from the traffic of those instruments of degradation and death of other human beings.

81. For that reason, Vanuatu had welcomed the holding of the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly, which had afforded an opportunity to make drug abuse and drug trafficking the focus of a concerted international effort. His delegation hoped that the words of the Political Declaration and the Global Programme of Action adopted at the special session would be translated into practical collective action.

82. His delegation commended the proposal of the Group of Experts appointed to advise and assist the Secretary-General for the creation in the United Nations of a single executive structure for drug abuse control, to be headed by a senior official and for the establishment, on the basis of equitable geographic distribution, of an advisory group or committee to assist and advise the head of the new structure on how to use and mobilize voluntary contributions for operational and technical co-operation activities.

83. For many years, the countries of the South Pacific had co-operated in the field of law enforcement, and they were now working diligently to develop effective regional responses to the drug programme in accordance with the Global Programme of

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

Action. The United Nations should include the South Pacific in its sphere of activities to combat drug abuse and drug trafficking. Proposals such as the one put forth at a recent meeting of Pacific island law officers in Port Moresby (Papua New Guinea) to provide legal assistance to South Pacific Governments in the area of drug control continued to generate considerable interest in the region.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

THIRD COMMITTEE
34th meeting
held on
Tuesday, 6 November 1989
at 6 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 34th MEETING

Chairman: Ms. ZINDOGA (Zimbabwe)
(Vice-Chairman)

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AGENDA ITEM 108: INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO COMBAT DRUG ABUSE AND ILLICIT TRAFFICKING (continued)

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A/C.3/45/SR.34
13 November 1990

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

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In the absence of the Chairman, Ms. Zindoga (Zimbabwe), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair

The meeting was called to order at 6.05 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 108: INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO COMBAT DRUG ABUSE AND ILLICIT TRAFFICKING (continued) (A/45/3, chap. V, sect. D, A/45/495, A/45/535, A/45/536, A/45/542, A/45/652 and Add.1, A/45/301, A/45/303, A/45/329; A/C.3/45/4 and E/1990/39/Add.1)

1. Miss BOTERO (Colombia) noted that there had been an increase in drug trafficking, in the number of drugs and narcotics on the world market and in the variety of narcotics available to consumers. Cheap drugs had become more accessible on the world market, drug-related violence and crime had shown a sharp upturn, as had the degree of corruption linked to drugs, while the profits made from money laundering and the wealth acquired by the international drug cartels continued to increase. Colombia had continued its struggle against all those evils, and although many people believed that its economy was helped by drug trafficking, the opposite was true: the battle waged against the drug traffic cost $US 1 billion a year in security expenses and material losses suffered as the result of the activities of the cartels. Colombia was not seeking handouts since, as its President had said more than once, it had a strong, stable economy and only wanted markets open to its exports. The roots of the drug problem were basically economic. Coca-producing countries were highly dependent on that crop because it was highly attractive in terms of price and costs. For that reason, the measures taken to solve the problem could not all be repressive although it was also necessary to remove the economic incentives of people engaged in illicit drug trafficking.

2. When a criminal activity was also a thriving business, the likelihood was that fewer people would engage in the activity if it ceased to yield profits. Drug trafficking could undoubtedly be curbed by reducing drug consumption and severely punishing those who made it possible. The drug cartels knew that Colombians would not relax until drug trafficking had been eliminated.

3. Colombia was reforming its judicial system in order to enhance its effectiveness as the main tool in the struggle; however, it could not win the battle on its own. International solidarity needed to find practical expression in action, and the strengthening of all judicial, legal and police systems was important to the success of measures to prevent the illegal diversion of arms and explosives for use in illicit drug trafficking and to ensure that the international financial system was not used for money laundering and that chemicals were not channelled into the illegal manufacture of narcotics and psychotropic substances. In connection with the latter point, her delegation wished to reiterate its support for an international conference on the production and distribution of chemicals used for such purposes.

4. Her delegation attached the greatest importance to the implementation of the Global Programme of Action adopted at the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly and containing a package of policies for execution by States and

(Miss Botero, Colombia)

by the United Nations, in which the link between the drug problem and development was recognized. She drew attention in particular to paragraphs 38 and 39 of the Programme of Action.

5. The time had come to go beyond rhetoric into the realm of practical action. The United Nations constituted a hub of concerted action at the multilateral level and should play a leadership role in combating drug abuse and illicit trafficking. The restructuring of drug control activities within the United Nations was of fundamental importance first because the existing units needed to be co-ordinated in order to avoid duplication of work and resources and secondly, because drug trafficking was a problem which cut across national borders and had to be dealt with by an efficient body capable of taking integrated action. Her delegation was grateful for the report of the Secretary-General on the enhancement of the efficiency of the United Nations structure for drug abuse control (A/45/652) and supported his proposal to create a drug control programme under one head, in the belief that that would promote consistency and co-ordination in the implementation of policies.

6. It also believed that the new United Nations international drug control programme should give maximum priority to the implementation of the Global Programme of Action. One useful proposal made by the Group of Experts which had assisted the Secretary-General with regard to the enhancement of the efficiency of the United Nations structure for drug abuse control related to the establishment of an advisory group to assist the head of the new structure in the mobilization and use of voluntary contributions for operational and technical assistance activities.

7. The delegation of Colombia was convinced that the time was ripe for action. The response of the international community to the act of aggression perpetrated by Iraq demonstrated the possibilities of concerted international action. Such action could be taken to eliminate drug trafficking.

8. Mr. VANNAVONG (Lao People's Democratic Republic) said that world events, including the ending of the cold war, in the past 18 months had produced tremendous hope and a relaxation of tension. His delegation hoped that those positive trends would help in the settlement of the basic problems affecting humanity, in particular the highly complex problem of drug abuse, which was by no means confined to a few countries and affected all strata of society. In some parts of the world, powerful drug cartels had instituted a reign of terror and corruption, and the international community had met many times to exchange views and attempt to find lasting solutions to the problem.

9. Most recently the seventeenth special session of the United Nations General Assembly, devoted to the question of international co-operation against illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs and the World Ministerial Summit to Reduce the Demand for Drugs and to Combat the Cocaine Threat showed the importance attached by the international community to the problem of drug addiction, and its feeling that it could be eradicated only through joint national and international efforts. His delegation felt that the struggle against

(Mr. Vannavong, Lao People's Democratic Republic)

drugs could succeed only through the simultaneous reduction of both supply and demand. Countries participating in the production, transit and consumption of drugs and the laundering of money derived from illicit drug trafficking should make a concerted effort to co-operate closely in combating the drug scourge.

10. The Lao People's Democratic Republic was a developing country affected by the drug problem. Poppies were grown by ethnic minorities in remote areas, which were difficult to reach. The Government had resolved to reduce the production of opium gradually and had adopted a two-pronged strategy for that purpose. First, it had campaigned energetically to convince the ethnic minorities to abandon the cultivation of poppies in favour of alternate crops. In that connection, it had signed a co-operation agreement with UNDP and the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC) governing an integrated rural development project and a similar agreement and a memorandum on co-operation in the field of narcotic drugs with the United States. In addition, it had sent officials to a seminar on crop substitution and received delegations from UNFDAC, Sweden, Japan and the United States to discuss the drug problem.

11. As a feature of the second prong of its approach, it had strengthened the laws and repressive measures relating to illicit drug trafficking in the country. As a result of that effort, government agents had dismantled two laboratories producing heroin in the northern part of the country. A national committee for the control and suppression of narcotic drugs had been established, and a new penal code imposing severe sanctions on drug traffickers had entered into force. Over 300 kilograms of drugs and drug-production equipment had been seized and publicly burned. Drug education seminars for customs agents and police officers had also been held.

12. His country subscribed fully to General Assembly resolution 44/141 and to the Global Programme of Action adopted at the seventeenth special session. It felt there was enough political will in the international community in respect of the elimination of drug abuse and trafficking but that the task could not be accomplished by will alone. Sufficient expertise and technical and financial resources were also needed. Although the United Nations had a crucial role to play in co-ordinating national and international efforts in that regard, the anti-drug crusade should be conducted with full respect for national and local conditions. It should not be used to serve political ends or as an excuse for intervening in the internal affairs of any country. His country was prepared to continue its co-operation with UNFDAC and with all countries concerned with finding a solution to the drug problem.

13. Mr. KHALIL (Egypt) said that his delegation commended the work done by the group of intergovernmental experts set up to help the Secretary-General prepare the report requested of him in General Assembly resolution 44/142 and supported all its recommendations as contained in document A/45/535, particularly the recommendation that the Secretary-General should undertake an analytical study to establish and quantify the link between illicit drug trafficking and external debt and all the

(Mr. Khalil, Egypt)

recommendations relating to money laundering. It also called on all Member States to co-operate with the proposed expert group to undertake a detailed study on the social consequences of drug abuse and illicit traffic. It further commended the Division of Narcotic Drugs for producing a booklet in English, French and Spanish to help schoolteachers to make an effective contribution to the prevention of drug abuse. In that connection, he said he hoped the booklet would also be translated into Arabic.

14. His Government was grateful for all the activities undertaken in Egypt by UNFDAC and the Division of Narcotic Drugs to combat the demand for drugs and to suppress illicit trafficking. Egypt was pleased to make a token annual contribution to the Fund to indicate its resolve to support United Nations activities in that field. In June 1980 it had hosted, in co-operation with the Division of Narcotic Drugs, the third meeting of heads of national drug law enforcement machinery in Africa. As the first country in Africa to establish an office to deal with the problem of drug abuse and trafficking, Egypt had always made its expertise available to other African and Arab States.

15. His delegation shared the Secretariat's concern regarding the lack of adequate resources to cope with drug abuse and trafficking, especially in view of their links to arms smuggling and the operation of international crime networks. In that connection, he praised the valuable report of the Group of Experts chosen to assist the Secretary-General in strengthening the response of the United Nations to the world's worsening drug problem (A/45/652/Add.1) and especially supported the recommendations made by the Group with regard to the rationalization of all United Nations machinery in the field of drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking in order to avoid duplication and waste, without prejudice to the terms of reference of the International Narcotics Control Board. The ways and means of achieving the goal of the elimination of drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking should not be allowed to detract from the ultimate aim, and the restructuring of United Nations drug control mechanisms should be regarded as only a starting point towards the achievement of greater effectiveness in international action to eliminate the problem.

16. Mr. MORAN (Canada) noted that 11 November 1990 would mark another milestone in the international struggle against drug abuse and trafficking in drugs with the coming into force of the Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, of which Canada was both a signatory and a ratifying State. In order to be fully effective, however, the Convention needed to operate in conjunction with a comprehensive, well-co-ordinated United Nations-led international attack against drug abuse and illicit trafficking. The Member States looked to the United Nations to provide leadership, co-ordination, support and guidance in their efforts to combat drugs. In that connection, he mentioned the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly, which had resulted in the adoption of a political declaration and a global programme of action and the initiation of a process to enhance the efficiency of the United Nations structure for drug abuse control, as called for in General Assembly resolution 44/141. That process had culminated in recommendations by the Secretary-General (A/45/652) and by the Group of Experts assisting him (A/45/652/Add.1), which Canada warmly

(Mr. Moran, Canada)

welcomed. In particular, it strongly supported the proposal to unify the existing drug control units based in Vienna under a single head reporting directly to the Secretary-General. The new structure should be the central liaison, co-ordination and co-operation mechanism for all drug control activities within the United Nations system and even beyond. Since a more efficient United Nations drug control system could only be of benefit to the entire international community, it was for the community to ensure that the restructuring of the system was in fact achieved.

17. Ms. DRAGHICI-SUTIC (Romania) said that Romania had embarked on the process of ratification of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and that it valued the promising results achieved at the World Ministerial Summit to Reduce the Demand for Drugs and to Combat the Cocaine Threat held in London in April 1990. It fully agreed with the points made in the report of the group of experts established to help the Secretary-General strengthen the response of the United Nations to the drug problem (A/45/652/Add.1) and with the conclusions of the eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (A/CONF.144/28), at which it had been found that the abuse of drugs was a global problem of great complexity requiring social policies on preventive measures and treatment.

18. The geographical position of Romania made it necessary for its Government to remain alert to the use of its territory as a transit zone for the smuggling of narcotic drugs. Her delegation was convinced that the struggle against drug abuse and illicit trafficking in drugs was the responsibility of the entire international community. The Government of Romania was prepared to bear its share of that responsibility along with the other participants in the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly, in accordance with the Political Declaration they had adopted.

19. Success in the struggle against drugs depended on close co-operation among Governments and between them and the United Nations system. The problem had to be attacked at all levels - local, national, regional and international - by taking concerted action of a practical nature in respect of supply control, demand, prevention and reduction, the elimination of illicit traffic and treatment and rehabilitation. At the local and national level, States were responsible for taking practical measures to ensure respect for each other's laws. Studies on appropriate ways of tackling the problem, such as the one recently issued by the Division of Narcotic Drugs, were always welcome.

20. Mr. MOHAMMAD ALI (Iraq), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said, with regard to the statement made by the representative of the United Kingdom at the 32nd meeting of the Committee, that he had found it surprising that in a statement delivered under agenda item 108 on international action to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking, Iraq, a drug-free country, had been named in a context which, in fact, had nothing to do with the matter under discussion.

The meeting rose at 6.55 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

THIRD COMMITTEE
35th meeting
held on
Wednesday, 7 November 1990
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 35th MEETING

Chairman:	Mr. SOMAVIA	(Chile)
later:	Ms. ZINDOGA (Vice-Chairman)	(Zimbabwe)
later:	Mrs. COOMBS (Vice-Chairman)	(New Zealand)

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A/C.3/45/SR.35
13 November 1990
ENGLISH
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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 119: PROGRAMME PLANNING (A/C.3/45/6)

1. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the letter from the Chairman of the Fifth Committee contained in document A/C.3/45/6 and recalled that the views of the Committee requested therein should be communicated to the Fifth Committee by 9 November 1990 at the latest.

2. Mr. BLANCA (Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation) said that the draft medium-term plan was being introduced at a time of particular importance for the Organization, in view of the long and arduous reform process which it had tried, and should be considered bearing in mind the ever-increasing responsibilities assigned to the United Nations, for example, in the sphere of illicit drug traffic control.

3. On the one hand, United Nations activities over the period 1992-1997 would be governed by two general priorities, the establishment and maintenance of peace and the improvement of the well-being of the "peoples of the United Nations". In addition, the priorities proposed by the Secretary-General in the proposed programme budget outline for the biennium 1992-1993 (A/45/369), which reflected broad sectoral trends, namely, the establishment of peace, Africa, the international combating of drugs, the environment and development, as well as the question of the economic development of the developing countries, added by the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination. In addition to those priorities, which were set forth in the draft programme budget for the coming biennium, in the introduction to the medium-term plan, the Secretary-General had drawn attention to various concrete priorities of special interest for the members of the Third Committee, such as those relating to human rights, population questions, the elaboration of a world social strategy, the role to be played by women in economic and social development and the development of human resources.

4. The multidisciplinary and multisectoral character of a large portion of those questions would require active co-ordination between intergovernmental organs and the relevant secretariats. Mention should be made in that regard of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs at Headquarters and the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs at Vienna.

5. It should be pointed out that it had been recognized that respect for human rights was inseparable from the development process and that, reciprocally, the right to development was a fundamental right, as had been demonstrated by many forums, including, in particular, the International Conference on Popular Participation in Development and Transformation in Africa (A/45/427). It should be said that the effectiveness of the combating of illicit drug traffic had been brought out in the Political Declaration and World Plan of Action adopted by the General Assembly at its seventeenth special session, and in the global plan of action for the United Nations system on control of drug abuse, which the Secretary-General had introduced in the current year to the Economic and Social

Council and the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination. That plan had a biennial basis and would be revised each year.

6. It went without saying that, during the six-year period covered by the draft medium-term plan, profound changes would take place in the world and, ultimately, in the United Nations. New problems would have to be resolved and, consequently, priorities would have to be modified. Flexibility would be required in order to keep United Nations activities up to date. Various conferences that would be held during that period would probably make it necessary to re-examine priorities, particularly the first session of UNCTAD, the Conference on the Environment and Development in 1992, the international meeting on population in 1994 and the World Conference on Women in 1995. The first reviews of the plan would be made in 1992, bearing in mind the decisions adopted recently by intergovernmental organs, in particular, the Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, recently held at Havana, whose decisions would be transmitted to the Third Committee for consideration and whose financial consequences would be considered by the Fifth Committee in the near future.

7. It was now for the Third Committee to transmit to the General Assembly its views and recommendations on the basis and structure of the medium-term plan. The social and humanitarian perspective of the Third Committee would be particularly useful to the Fifth Committee, which would be considering the plan from the pragmatic and budgetary viewpoint. The Third Committee should indicate whether the plan reflected contemporary realities or whether it should be modified in the light of recent events.

8. Mr. DUHS (Sweden), speaking also on behalf of Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Norway, said that the Nordic countries had always given firm support to the work of the United Nations in the promotion and protection of human rights, which had gradually passed from the elaboration of instruments to supervision of their implementation. He referred to the compendious work of the Centre for Human Rights, whose technical support was essential for the effective functioning of the Commission on Human Rights and the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. In the near future, the activities of the Centre would be considerably expanded and would include the supply of Secretariat personnel to the treaty bodies established under the various human rights conventions, advisory services, technical assistance and public information. It would also have to collaborate with other organs of the United Nations system in matters relating to popular participation in the decision-making process, as a part of the promotion of the democratization process. Consequently, the imbalance caused by the reduction of the financial resources and the staff of the Centre, as set forth in the report of the Secretary-General to the Economic and Social Council (E/1990/50), was disturbing. The enlargement of the Commission on Human Rights, which would have 10 additional member States as from 1992, would certainly increase the work-load of the Centre.

9. In resolution 1990/47, adopted by the Economic and Social Council on 25 May 1990, the Secretary-General was requested to include in the draft programme

(Mr. Duhs, Sweden)

budget for the biennium 1992-1993 proposals for the long-term solution of those problems, and it was important that those proposals should be reflected in the budgetary decisions to be adopted shortly.

10. The Nordic countries supported the decision that the activities of the Committee on the Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child should be financed from the regular budget, and they supported the same principle with regard to the committee on the implementation of the proposed international convention on the protection of the rights of all migrant workers and their families, which the Nordic countries hoped would be adopted at the current session of the General Assembly. The establishment of those new treaty bodies would make it necessary to appropriate additional resources for human rights programmes, and it would have to be ensured that the United Nations had the necessary capacity to deal properly with that question, which was one of the main purposes of the Charter.

11. Ms. Zindoga (Zimbabwe), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

12. Mr. KESSEL (Canada), speaking also on behalf of Australia and New Zealand and responding to the invitation of the Chairman of the Fifth Committee contained in document A/C.3/45/6, said that, in the introduction to the draft medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 (A/45/6), the main programmes relating to the advancement of women, the international combating of drugs, the prevention of crime and criminal justice and the protection and promotion of human rights were marked as priority areas, thus appropriately highlighting the role of the Organization in the social sphere. He emphasized that the human rights programme should continue to receive special attention in the revision of the medium-term plan, in view of the concepts expressed in paragraph 31 of the introduction referred to with regard to the special responsibility of the United Nations for promotion of respect for human rights, and, in paragraph 39, to the fact that the Organization's priorities should derive naturally from the ideals set forth in the Charter and other fundamental instruments.

13. In the introduction to the draft medium-term plan, the Secretary-General affirmed that an ongoing effort was required that should not be influenced by short-term practical considerations. Some delegations had expressed their concern, also reflected in Economic and Social Council resolution 1990/47, about the limited resources devoted to the Centre for Human Rights at a time when its work-load was increasing and would, undoubtedly, continue to increase. It was necessary to continue careful examination of the financing problems of the other treaty organs, to make tremendous efforts to provide technical assistance and advisory services and to attend to individual communications, a task which, in itself, imposed a large work-load and required qualified personnel. The delegations of Australia, Canada and New Zealand therefore considered that, in the conclusions and recommendations of the report of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination on the first part of its thirtieth session (A/46/16 (Part I)), the importance of the human rights programme was not properly reflected.

14. Mrs. ASHTON (Bolivia), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and referring to document A/C.3/45/6 and, in particular, programmes 12, 13 and 25 to 36, contained in the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, said that the programmes did not properly reflect several of the mandates adopted by the bodies concerned. There were also some discrepancies in others with regard to concepts and strategies. She therefore requested more time so that she could state her final position on the matter in more detail.

15. Mr. KHODAKOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, in formulating a plan, it was most important to establish appropriate priorities, especially when, as in the case of the United Nations, the resources were limited. At a time when mankind was abandoning confrontation, one of the top United Nations priorities, as reflected in the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization, concerned activities in the human rights sector. In recent years many important instruments had been drawn up and measures were being taken to ensure that the provisions set forth in those instruments were properly implemented.

16. The work of the United Nations bodies and Secretariat divisions concerned with human rights had grown enormously, inter alia, because the Third Committee assigned new mandates to the Commission on Human Rights and the Centre for Human Rights, whose resources and staffing had nevertheless diminished. Sufficient resources ought to be allocated for human rights activities, not only for the medium term but also for the short-term. He hoped that that concern, also voiced by other delegations, would be duly addressed in the decisions of the Fifth Committee on the budget and planning.

17. The United Nations organizations participating in international action to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking should also be provided with the requisite financial support, precisely at a time when the United Nations had solemnly decided that the international community must co-ordinate its action to eradicate that scourge. Close attention would therefore have to be given to ways of economizing and redistributing resources so as to raise the requisite finance for those activities.

18. Mrs. DU YONG (China) said that the introduction to the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, recently discussed in the Fifth Committee, was much more accurate than the introduction discussed two years before in the Third Committee, especially with regard to certain topics of interest to the Third Committee.

19. Although programme 27, entitled "Advancement of women", was well formulated and gave top priority to addressing the basic needs of women in the developing countries, it did not sufficiently express the deep concern felt by the Committee with regard to the fate of women under the apartheid régime of South Africa and of those living in occupied territories.

20. Programme 36, entitled "International protection of and assistance to refugees", was practical and basically viable. It did not, however, mention the serious problem of the increase in refugees precisely at a time when the financial contributions had decreased.

(Mrs. Du Yong, China)

21. Programme 28, entitled "International drug control", dealt with the most important problems of drug control and reflected the facts appropriately. Nevertheless, it did not take up the question of structural adjustment in that sector. It was to be hoped that the problem would be addressed when a decision was taken on the programme.

22. Paragraph 35, entitled "Promotion and protection of human rights", had some defects. It did not recognize the different interpretations of human rights in terms of the various political, economic, social and legal régimes and the various cultural traditions and religious creeds existing in the world. On the contrary, it singled out only one of them and referred to it as "universally recognized".

23. The statement, in paragraph 3 of the general orientation, that "the interrelationship between human rights, peace and development will continue to guide the United Nations in its approach to human rights in the decade of the 1990s" was inaccurate. The Charter spoke of human rights, peace and development in different chapters and did not establish an interrelationship between them. The assertion that "the international community can be expected to turn increasingly to United Nations human rights organs ... for peaceful and constructive solutions to human rights problems" did not take into account the fact that such problems existing in a given country could be solved only by the Government and population of that country and not by external entities, including the United Nations.

24. The phrase "universal culture of human rights", in the last paragraph of the Strategy, might give rise to confusion unless it was clarified.

25. Reference was made in the subprogrammes only to the need to give priority to international instruments, but no mention was made to specific priority human rights although they were clearly expressed in paragraphs (e) and (f) of General Assembly resolution 32/130 of 16 December 1977.

26. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was not included in paragraph 35.14. In subprogramme (iv) priority was given not to the most pressing and universal questions but to new subjects, even though human rights problems affecting a large proportion of humanity were, in particular, problems which affected one fifth of the world's population, i.e. one third of the population of the developing countries who lived below the poverty line, and tens of millions of people who were unemployed and, therefore, deprived of the right to work.

27. In conclusion, she entered reservations on a proposal to establish a United Nations computerized database on human rights. While it was useful to apply certain modern technologies which, for example, improved the work of the Centre for Human Rights, a project on that enormous scale would be too costly and unjustifiable given the current financial crisis of the United Nations.

28. Mr. MEZZALAMA (Italy), speaking on behalf of the 12 member States of the European Community, said that two principles should be taken into account when formulating the United Nations medium-term plan. First, thought must be given to assigning priority to a subject if it could be proved that multilateral United Nations measures were important for achieving its purposes. Secondly, the medium-term plan should deal with questions of permanent concern to the international community.

29. The member States of the European Community endorsed the Secretary-General's opinions, expressed in his introduction to the proposed medium-term plan and his report on the work of the Organization, relating to the importance of universal respect for human rights in international affairs and to the link between total protection of the individual, his human rights and fundamental freedoms and the maintenance of world peace. The Twelve took the view that, at a time when the international political situation was undergoing such profound transformations, the resources for implementing the specific mandate assigned by the Charter to the United Nations for the promotion and protection of human rights (programme 35) should be redistributed. The funds earmarked for such activities, amounting to less than 1 per cent of the total budget, should be increased. In particular, the financial problems of the Centre for Human Rights should be addressed, because its commitments and work-load had become heavier, while its resources had not risen in proportion. The Twelve hoped that the medium-term plan would take into account the need to strengthen the Centre and that the necessary resources would be provided as from the first year of its implementation.

30. The Twelve were gratified that the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination had recommended adoption of draft programme 35. It was, however, unfortunate that agreement had not been reached on a balanced set of amendments to the Secretary-General's proposals on the medium-term plan.

31. Finally, emphasis should be laid on two current priority commitments of the United Nations: action to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking, on which there seemed to be an increasingly broader consensus in the international community, and the protection of and assistance to refugees, which was essential in a world which was aware of large population movements and becoming smaller day by day.

32. Mrs. McLENNAN (United States of America) said that implementation of the objectives established by the Secretary-General would promote the kind of world community envisaged by the drafters of the United Nations Charter 45 years ago. Her delegation endorsed the conceptualization and formulation of long-term policies with respect to recruitment and placement put forward in programme 41 (A/45/6), as well as the concern for the advancement of the legal and social status of women in the Secretariat. It also agreed that ways and means should be found for maintaining all Member States within their desirable ranges in posts subject to geographical distribution.

33. Her delegation also supported the Secretary-General's concept of implementing wider and more aggressive campaigns to identify recruitment sources and qualified

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candidates, especially female candidates, as well as the goal of attracting and retaining staff of the highest calibre in order to carry out the Organization's programmes successfully. To that end, it fully supported increasing the percentage of women in the Professional category and above in posts subject to geographical distribution by at least 1 per cent each year beyond the target of 30 per cent set for 1990, bringing the percentage to 37 per cent by the end of the medium-term plan period.

34. Her delegation was encouraged that there was increased understanding that respect for human rights was closely linked with a number of factors related to a society's overall welfare and growth, i.e., security, social progress, economic development and appropriate treatment of racial, ethnic and national minorities. It also considered highly significant the increased willingness of the international community to treat respect for human rights as an intrinsic and essential nature of civilized society and not as an isolated topic.

35. In her delegation's view, effective implementation of existing commitments should be the predominent focus of the Organization's human rights activities. The effectiveness of those human rights activities could be increased through intensified efforts to share information and other resources and to pursue common goals by means of joint activity.

36. Mr. KRENKEL (Austria) repeated the comment made by his delegation at the thirtieth session of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination that the current human rights programme did not refer to all international human rights instruments and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in a comprehensive manner. His delegation agreed in principle with the priority established among the four subprogrammes (programme 35, A/45/6) in giving highest priority to the implementation of international instruments and procedures. However, it missed the reference to the implementation of international standards contained in the current medium-term plan.

37. With respect to subprogramme 2, his delegation would again note that the rights of migrant workers were of a different nature from those of minorities, and that a clear distinction and separation should therefore be made between the activities envisaged in those fields.

38. Subprogramme 4, dealing with research, studies and standard-setting, contained a wide range of subjects unrelated to the issue of human rights. For that reason, it should be dealt with in other programmes.

39. His delegation shared the view of the Nordic countries that the increasing demands on the Centre for Human Rights required adequate staffing and financial resources out of the regular budget.

40. The CHAIRMAN informed the Committee that a letter would be sent to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee in conjunction with the summary record of the 35th meeting, drawing attention to the statement made by the Bolivian representative on behalf of the Group of 77 and summarizing the views expressed by representatives with respect to the 1992-1997 medium-term plan.

AGENDA ITEM 89: EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF UNITED NATIONS INSTRUMENTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND EFFECTIVE FUNCTIONING OF BODIES ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO SUCH INSTRUMENTS (A/45/3, chap. V, sect. A, A/45/707, A/45/636, A/45/205, A/45/207, A/45/216, A/45/222, A/45/227, A/45/230, A/45/264, A/45/265, A/45/266, A/45/267, A/45/269, A/45/270, A/45/272, A/45/280, A/45/668)

AGENDA ITEM 93: HUMAN RIGHTS AND SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS (A/45/3, chap. V, sect. A, A/45/580)

AGENDA ITEM 97: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (A/45/473, A/45/202, A/45/222, A/45/265, A/45/269)

AGENDA ITEM 105: INTERNATIONAL COVENANTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS (A/45/3, chap. V, sect. A, A/45/40, A/45/403, A/45/174, A/45/178, A/45/597, A/45/598, A/45/657; E/1990/23)

AGENDA ITEM 106: ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE (A/45/205, A/45/222, A/45/225, A/45/265, A/45/270; E/1990/22)

AGENDA ITEM 109: TORTURE AND OTHER CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT (A/45/44 and Corr.1, A/45/615, A/45/405, A/45/633, A/45/189, A/45/205, A/45/207, A/45/216, A/45/225, A/45/227, A/45/230, A/45/254, A/45/264, A/45/266, A/45/280)

AGENDA ITEM 110: ENHANCING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PRINCIPLE OF PERIODIC AND GENUINE ELECTIONS (A/45/202, A/45/203, A/45/205, A/45/207, A/45/225, A/45/227, A/45/230, A/45/254, A/45/264, A/45/265, A/45/266, A/45/267, A/45/269, A/45/270, A/45/272, A/45/280, A/45/626; E/1990/22)

Introduction and general debate

41. Mr. HOUSHMAND (Director, Implementation of International Instruments and Procedures Branch, Centre for Human Rights) introduced the group of human rights themes relating to the human rights treaty régime and other related themes.

42. Introducing item 89, he drew attention to the relevant documents and announced that, pursuant to paragraph 7 (b) of General Assembly resolution 44/135 of 15 December 1989, a brief report by the Secretary-General relating to financial and staffing resources needed for the operations of the treaty bodies was being prepared and would be available shortly. The international human rights treaty system was at the core of the work of the United Nations in the human rights field and its role continued to increase in importance as the number of ratifications to the existing treaties grew and as new instruments such as the Convention on the

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Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Migrant Workers were adopted and entered into force. That justified the long-standing interest of the General Assembly in the effective implementation of the various instruments and the effective functioning of the treaty bodies.

43. The preparation of consolidated reporting guidelines for the initial part of State party reports had been successfully completed. The persons chairing the treaty bodies had recommended that they be added to the relevant guidelines adopted by each of the treaty bodies as soon as possible. The preparation of those consolidated guidelines clearly represented an important step forward in rationalizing the reporting system and would lessen the reporting burdens of States parties.

44. The work of the task force on computerization had also been completed. The task force had recommended that an appropriate data base for storing and processing information relating to the reporting system should be established at the Centre for Human Rights in Geneva. That recommendation had since been endorsed by the Commission on Human Rights and the Economic and Social Council. He was hopeful that the Assembly would take positive action on the recommendation and, if it did so, the Secretary-General would seek voluntary contributions from United Nations Member States, covering installation costs. The system could be made operational within two years. The Secretary-General believed that the introduction of a modern data processing and retrieval system would facilitate the work of the treaty bodies and the Centre for Human Rights to a considerable extent in the near term. Over the long term it would probably prove indispensable in ensuring that they could discharge their monitoring functions effectively.

45. Another important mark of progress had been the completion of the Manual on Reporting compiled by UNITAR in co-operation with the Centre for Human Rights.

46. Continuing attention must be devoted to the effective functioning of the treaty system. At a recent meeting the persons chairing the various human rights treaty bodies had considered the independent expert's conclusions and the recommendations concerning long-term approaches to enhancing the effectiveness of the treaty system. He wished to draw attention to some of those conclusions and recommendations, inter alia, that steps should be taken to promote greater interaction among the treaty bodies as a means of contributing to the effective development of the human rights treaty system as a whole; that each United Nations Information Office should make available to countries, particularly to those sectors directly responsible for the implementation of human rights, copies of reports submitted by the State concerned, together with the summary records relating to the consideration of those reports; and that the programme of the proposed world conference on human rights should fully reflect the work of the treaty bodies and that they could be consulted, in so far as possible, concerning preparations for such a conference.

47. The General Assembly should take appropriate action to institutionalize the meeting of persons chairing treaty bodies and ensure that it was held at least once

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every two years. The Secretary-General and the General Assembly should ensure that the Secretariat had more resources, so that treaty bodies could function effectively. Although the increased work-load and responsibilities of the Centre for Human Rights had increased, the resources allocated to it had not increased proportionately. He drew attention to paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 44/135 of 15 December 1989, which endorsed the recommendation on the need to ensure adequate financing and staffing resources for the operations of treaty bodies and requested the Secretary-General to report on that question to the Commission on Human Rights at its forty-sixth session and to the General Assembly at its current session. He referred to the reports prepared on the Centre's resource problems.

48. Referring to agenda item 97 entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child", he said that thus far, 130 States had signed the Convention. The international community's willingness to act so rapidly on the matter demonstrated its resolve to improve the lot of children and to safeguard their fundamental rights. The Committee on the Rights of the Child would be established under the Convention in order to co-ordinate international efforts to incorporate the rights set forth in the Convention in national law and practice. It was to be hoped that the Committee, in co-operation with the States parties to the Convention and the assistance of institutions such as UNICEF, the specialized agencies and the community of non-governmental organizations, would be able not only to identify problems which prevented children from fully enjoying their rights, but also to indicate out possible solutions and mobilize the necessary resources.

49. The first meeting of States parties, at which members of the Committee would be elected, was scheduled to be held at Headquarters on 27 February 1991. Nominations must be received no later than 12 December 1990. The Committee on the Rights of the Child was expected to be in a position to hold its first session by mid-1991 at the latest.

50. Referring to agenda item 105 on the International Covenants on Human Rights, he said that the Third Committee had before it the report of the Human Rights Committee (A/45/40), the report of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (E/1990/23), and the report of the Secretary-General on the status of the International Covenants on Human Rights and the two Optional Protocols (A/45/403).

51. Since the publication of the report of the Secretary-General, Malta had ratified both Covenants. In the past year, Ireland, Malta, the Republic of Korea and Somalia had joined the States parties to the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Australia, New Zealand, Portugal and Sweden had joined the States parties to the Second Optional Protocol to the Covenant, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty. Similarly, Chile, Ireland, Malta, Poland and the Republic of Korea had made the declaration provided for in article 41 of the Covenant, as 25 other States had done previously.

52. The Human Rights Committee had achieved significant progress in carrying out its work under article 40 of the Covenant and the Optional Protocol. During the three sessions covered by its report, the Committee had considered 14 reports from

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States parties and received many communications under the Optional Protocol. It had also formulated 11 final views. In order to keep informed more systematically of the action taken in response to such views, the Committee, at its thirty-ninth session, had amended its guidelines for the submission of reports and requested States parties to include appropriate information in their reports. It had also appointed a Special Rapporteur for the follow-up of views under the Optional Protocol.

53. The Committee had welcomed the adoption by the General Assembly of the Second Optional Protocol to the Covenant, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty. It had observed that the new Protocol would serve as a complement to article 6 of the Covenant and that, when it entered into force, those States which had ratified it would have to include information regarding their compliance with its provisions in their reports under article 40 of the Covenant.

54. The Committee had continued preparing further general comments concerning various provisions of the Covenant and had adopted two general comments relating to the provisions of the Covenant on non-discrimination and article 23 of the Covenant.

55. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, in the four sessions it had held thus far, had considered a total of 49 reports from 35 States parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. One important measure for the improvement of its work methods had been the preparation of its rules of procedure, which had already been approved by the Economic and Social Council. The Committee had revised the arrangements for the submission of reports and, as a result, the earlier sectional reports would be replaced by a unified global report and reporting obligations under the Covenant would be consistent with those under other human rights instruments.

56. The Committee, in a mutually beneficial dialogue with the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, had invited two special rapporteurs of the Sub-Commission to participate in the Committee's proceedings in 1989 and 1990.

57. The Committee, in its second general comment, which primarily concerned the role of human rights in development, had called on the United Nations development agencies to avoid involvement in projects which were not fully consistent with the exercise of civil and political rights and to promote projects and approaches which contributed not only to economic growth, but also to the enjoyment of the full range of human rights.

58. The Committee had recommended that, in order to prevent activities undertaken in the name of development from having counterproductive effects on human rights, as had been the case in the past, United Nations development agencies and organs should recognize the existence of an intimate relationship between development activities and respect for human rights. They should also require the preparation of a statement on the human rights impact of major development co-operation activities; provide information on human rights principles and standards to

personnel employed by United Nations development projects; and ascertain that the rights provided for in the International Covenants were taken into account at each phase of development projects.

59. The views reflected in the general comment, contained in annex III of the Committee's report, had been brought to the attention of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole for the Preparation of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade.

60. Referring to agenda item 109 on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, he said that the Third Committee had before it, inter alia, the report of the Secretary-General on the status of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (A/45/405) and the third annual report of the Committee against Torture (A/45/44). As of 1 November 1990, 53 States had ratified or acceded to the Convention; 21 States had signed the Convention but had not yet ratified it. Twenty-four States parties to the Convention had made the declarations provided for in articles 21 and 22 of the Convention; one State party had made the declaration provided for in article 21 only.

61. The Committee against Torture had held its third and fourth sessions at the United Nations Office at Geneva in November 1989 and April 1990, respectively. It had considered initial reports submitted by 16 States parties. The Committee had revised its guidelines for the submission of initial reports under article 19 of the Convention and had designated from among its members country rapporteurs for the reports of States parties to be considered at its fifth session in November 1990. At its fourth session, the Committee had considered, for the first time, information submitted under article 20 of the Convention and concluded its consideration of three communications submitted under article 22. Its decisions on those communications were contained in the annual report.

62. The General Assembly had before it the Secretary-General's report on the Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture (A/45/633). The recommendations of the Board of Trustees of the Fund to the Secretary-General at its ninth session in 1990 involved a total funding of approximately $US 2 million, which was not sufficient to meet the increasing requests for aid or to combat the often long-lasting consequences of acts of torture. Further contributions from Governments were required to meet those needs.

63. At its forty-fourth session the General Assembly had continued its consideration of reports of the torture and inhuman treatment of children in detention in South Africa. The Assembly had requested the Commission on Human Rights to continue to pay special attention to the question of detention, torture and other forms of inhuman treatment of children in South Africa and had requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the topic at its forty-fifth session. At its current session the General Assembly had before it a report on the topic in A/45/615.

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64. With regard to agenda item 93 on human rights and scientific and technological developments, the General Assembly had, at its two previous sessions, considered the issues of the right to life, the regulation of computerized personal data files, the implementation of the Declaration on the Use of Scientific and Technological Progress in the Interests of Peace and for the Benefit of Mankind, and the protection of persons suffering from mental disorder. The United Nations respected the inherent right to life of all people, as reaffirmed by the General Assembly in 1988, through the adoption of practical measures and the establishment of principles and procedures to protect that right. Mention should be made of the adoption in 1989 of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, and of the two general comments on the right to life adopted by the Human Rights Committee.

65. The Third Committee had before it document E/CN.4/1990/72, containing a revised version of the guidelines on the use of computerized personal files, adopted by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1990/38, on the recommendation of the Commission on Human Rights.

66. At its forty-sixth session, and in accordance with General Assembly resolution 44/133 requesting it to continue to give attention to the implementation of the provisions of the Declaration on the Use of Scientific and Technological Progress, the Commission on Human Rights had invited the United Nations University, in co-operation with other interested academic research institutions, to submit to it at its forty-seventh session a final report on the positive and negative impacts of scientific and technological developments on human rights. At the same time the Commission called upon all States to make every effort to use the achievements of science and technology in order to promote peaceful social, economic and cultural development and to ensure that their results were used for the benefit of humankind and for promoting and encouraging universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

67. The Commission on Human Rights, at its forty-sixth session, had decided to make appropriate meeting time available to its working group, prior to the forty-seventh session of the Commission, for it to continue to examine, revise and simplify the draft body of principles and guarantees for the protection of mentally ill persons and for the improvement of mental health care. The working group was currently meeting in Geneva.

68. With regard to agenda item 106, on the elimination of all forms of religious intolerance, the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities was continuing to consider whether the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief should be supplemented with a further international instrument. At the request of the Committee, a member of the Sub-Commission had prepared a working paper comprising a compilation of provisions relevant to the elimination of intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief, and enumerating the issues and factors to be considered before any drafting of a further binding international instrument.

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69. With regard to agenda item 110, he cited article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as General Assembly resolution 43/157 of 8 December 1988. The latter stated that periodic and genuine elections were a necessary and indispensable element of sustained efforts to protect the rights and interests of the governed and that determining the will of the people required an electoral process which accommodated distinct alternatives and provided an equal opportunity for all citizens to become candidates, and called upon the Commission on Human Rights, at its forty-fifth session, to consider appropriate ways and means of enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections, in the context of full respect for the sovereignty of Member States.

70. The Commission on Human Rights had examined the issue in 1989 and had adopted resolution 1989/51, entitled "Enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections". At its forty-fourth session, the General Assembly had adopted resolutions 44/146 and 44/147 in which it had called upon the Commission on Human Rights, at its forty-sixth session, to continue its consideration of appropriate ways and means of enhancing the effectiveness of that principle and to report to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session, through the Economic and Social Council, and also, at its forty-sixth session, to give priority to the review of the fundamental factors that negatively affect the observance of the principle of national sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of States in their electoral processes, and to report to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session, through the Economic and Social Council.

71. Popular participation, one of the questions examined by the Commission on Human Rights, was of vital importance to the protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms. It covered a wide area of human activity and could therefore be the subject of an in-depth expert study, especially in the light of recent democratic developments.

72. Mr. TRAXLER (Italy), speaking on behalf of the 12 States members of the European Community, noted the priority accorded by the United Nations to the promotion and protection of human rights and to the framework which had been established by various international instruments in that field, starting with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. That framework had been extended by the adoption by the General Assembly of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

73. The European Community and its member States believed that, in the future, particular attention should be given to securing universal adherence to, and monitoring compliance with, the existing instruments. That did not exclude the possible adoption of further instruments, provided that the need for them was clearly established and that the guidelines approved by the General Assembly by its resolution 41/120 of 4 December 1986 were followed. With regard to those guidelines, the subject-matter of any new international standards should be of a fundamental character, consistent with the existing instruments for the protection

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of international rights and drafted in a way that clearly defined the rights and ensured their effective implementation. It was fitting to record those provisions, adopted by the General Assembly in 1986, since in 1990 it was examining the international convention on the protection of the rights of all migrant workers and their families. The Twelve recognized the extensive work undertaken by the working group responsible for its elaboration and welcomed the practice whereby the Centre for Human Rights reviewed the drafts of international instruments, a practice which should be applied whenever necessary, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 41/120.

74. The Twelve believed that, in order to prevent the universal principles on which human rights were based from being weakened by the proliferation of standards, that practice should, in the future, be restricted to those cases where there was a broad international consensus in favour of the drafting of a new instrument. While the collective aspects of human rights should be recognized, the international community should strongly emphasize the individual nature of those rights. The Twelve reaffirmed the need for full implementation of economic, social and cultural rights, and also the obligation to respect civil and political rights, without in any way subordinating that obligation to their implementation. Both categories of rights were of equal importance and all Governments were obliged to promote, respect and implement them. The European Community and its member States believed that, when drafting resolutions which could affect the interpretation of international instruments, delegations should bear in mind the principles of logical and textual consistency established by General Assembly resolution 41/120 on standard-setting activities.

75. The Twelve welcomed the ratifications and accessions registered for the International Covenants on Human Rights and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. They encouraged countries having difficulties in introducing in their legislation the changes necessary for their ratification to request the appropriate support from the Centre for Human Rights under the advisory services and technical assistance programme. They also recommended that States parties to human rights instruments should periodically review any reservations on the provisions of the Conventions so as to ascertain whether they should be maintained.

76. Concerning the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Twelve noted with concern the deterioration in that situation, according to the reports on torture submitted by the Special Rapporteur to the Commission on Human Rights, and invited the States which had not fully co-operated with the Special Rapporteur to begin giving him the necessary assistance.

77. The Twelve favoured close contact and exchange of information between the Special Rapporteur and the Committee against Torture and supported his recommendations, particularly those contributing to prevention of torture and those relating to provision of advisory services to assist certain Governments in their efforts to remedy existing situations. In particular, the Twelve were alarmed at

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reports of torture of children and young people, as well as the participation, direct or indirect, of medical doctors and health personnel in such practices. The medical ethics principles adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 37/194 of 18 December 1982 must be strictly observed.

78. Particular attention should be drawn to the situation caused by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. There had been numerous instances of torture and other human rights violations which, in the opinion of the Twelve, merited outright condemnation.

79. As for agenda item 105, the United Nations had taken a decisive step towards recognition of the need to protect and care for children by adopting a legally binding instrument. The Convention on the Rights of the Child provided, inter alia, for the establishment of a committee of experts to monitor its implementation. Moreover, at its last session, the Commission on Human Rights had decided to appoint a new Special Rapporteur to consider specific matters relating to the protection of children.

80. Mrs. Coombs (New Zealand), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

81. In re-examining the principles incorporated in the Declaration on the Right to Development, adopted by the General Assembly in 1986, it was possible to see elements of the relationship between economic development and respect for human rights. The integration of human rights concepts into economic development, occasionally mentioned in the Declaration, placed the individual human being at the centre of the development process. That interpretation reflected a general trend towards a relationship of democracy, human rights and sustainable development. In the context of international development co-operation it had been recognized recently that open democratic systems and respect for human rights strengthened efforts to achieve development, economic efficiency and equitable income distribution.

82. The international community was indebted to those individuals and non-governmental organizations who had dedicated themselves to exposing violations of human rights - often at grave risk to themselves - and to assisting victims, including representatives of the communications media, who had exposed such acts. The Twelve were encouraged by the progress made by the Working Group of the Commission on Human Rights in preparing a draft declaration on the rights and responsibilities of individuals, groups and institutions in society, for the promotion and protection of rights and fundamental freedoms. They expressed their satisfaction that the Commission, in its resolution 1990/42, had decided to transmit to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, draft guidelines on the use of computerized personal files. Such guidelines were necessary to protect individuals from the abuse of new technologies.

83. The Twelve attached great importance to the role of human rights treaty bodies in promoting human rights and protecting their enjoyment by such means as the examination of periodic reports submitted by States parties, the formulation of

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general recommendations, the formulation of general comments and the examination of individual complaints. They welcomed the meeting of the chairmen of those bodies, held at Geneva in October for the purpose of exchanging information and making recommendations.

84. Mr. KONKOBO (Burkina Faso) said that, 30 years after adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of the Child, the international community had, at the recent World Summit for Children, provided itself with the first legal instrument for defining the status and guaranteeing the rights of children in society: the Convention on the Rights of the Child. That Convention was the fruit of the labours of the Commission on Human Rights, and Burkina Faso was gratified by the unusual speed with which States, itself among them, had signed and ratified it.

85. Burkina Faso was one of the African countries where children under 15 years of age represented almost 50 per cent of the total population. For that reason, they were constantly working on programmes and adopting strategies for promoting children, a vulnerable social sector, by solving such problems as the low rate of school enrolment, precarious health conditions characterized by high child morbidity and mortality rates, unfavourable social and economic conditions and mutilation practices affecting the health of mothers and children. In particular, the entry into force, in August, of the Code on Individuals and the Family was noteworthy. It included many provisions for the benefit of children, such as the principle of equality of all children, establishing a minimum age for marriage, the principle of the best interest of the child in the event of parental separation, and priority given to child care by the mother or responsibility shared by the mother and father.

86. Ms. GRES (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that there was an evident need to adopt effective and immediate measures at the national and international levels for improving the status of children. The States parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child recognized the right of each child to a standard of living conducive to his or her social and physical development. However, current living conditions were impeding the harmonious development of society, owing to the terrible state of the environment polluted by chemical discharges, irrational use of chemicals in agriculture and nuclear-weapon tests. An increase in allergies was apparent everywhere, and genetic deformities and diseases of the immune system had raised the level of cancer by some 5 per cent. The AIDS problem had been a major preoccupation of the entire world.

87. Child health was a major concern for the medical community in the Byelorussian SSR. Four years after the Chernobyl accident, it had been found that 24 per cent of the children suffered from chronic illnesses, only one or two children in a hundred enjoyed good health and the rest had some disease. Four thousand children died each day in the world from hunger and illness. Alcoholism, drug addiction and delinquency were only some of the ills afflicting the planet. In those circumstances, it was impossible to speak of spiritual development.

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88. The Convention recognized the child's need to grow up in a family environment in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding, yet the percentage of divorces and children born out of wedlock was constantly increasing. In the Byelorussian SSR, the number of detention and other homes for young people was constantly rising, and in many other countries the number of homeless children was growing. Solving that problem in one country alone would be a mere drop in an immense bucket so far as the needs of children were concerned. Her Government welcomed the establishment of UNICEF offices in all countries and was ready to open one in Minsk very soon. Regrettably, not all States parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child had legislation for the protection of children. Byelorussia called on States which still had not done so to sign and ratify the Convention in order to ensure special protection and continued improvement of the status of children. Ratification would contribute not only towards the achievement of national, regional and global child-protection objectives, but also towards spreading awareness in the international community that the rights of the child were not a matter of generosity, but an integral part of human rights.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.